

Kimberly Elman Zarecor

MANUFACTURING A SOCIALIST MODERNITY

Housing in Czechoslovakia, 1945–1960



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KIMBERLY ELMAN ZARECOR

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For Scott and Maximilian

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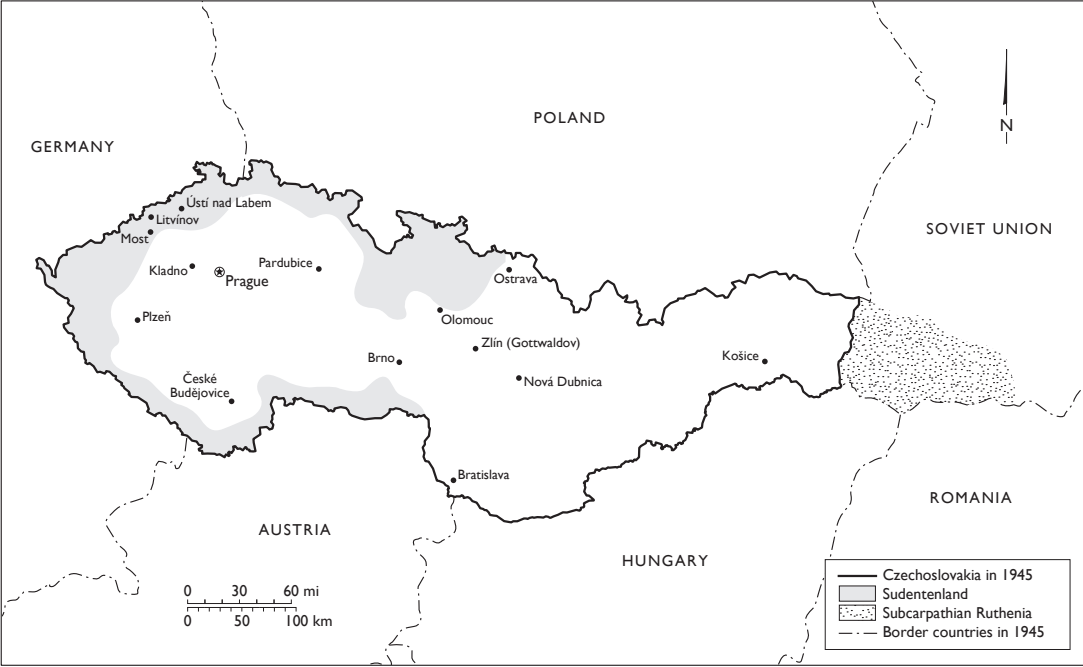
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MANUFACTURING A SOCIALIST MODERNITY



CZECHOSLOVAKIA IN ITS REGIONAL CONTEXT, 1945

INTRODUCTION

Writing a Postwar History

The biggest victim of the Stalinization of architecture was housing. [Karel] Teige would have recoiled in horror at the endless drab rows of prefabricated boxes of mass housing proliferating around all the major cities of Czechoslovakia. Here was the exact antithesis of his utopia of collective dwelling, resembling more the housing barracks of capitalist rent exploitation and greed than the joyful housing developments of a new socialist paradise.... The result was one of the most depressing collections of banality in the history of Czech architecture, one that still mars the architectural landscape of this small country and will be difficult—if not impossible—to erase from its map for decades, if not centuries. Eric Dluhosch, 2002

Few building types are as vilified as the socialist housing block. Built by the thousands in Eastern Europe in the decades after World War II, the apartment buildings of the planned economy are notorious for problems such as faulty construction methods, lack of space, nonexistent landscaping, long-term maintenance lapses, and general ugliness. The typical narrative of the construction and perceived failure of these blocks, the most iconic of which was the structural panel building (*panelový dům* or *panelák*, for short, in Czech), places the blame with a Soviet-imposed system of building that was forced upon the unwilling countries of Eastern Europe after the Communists came to power.¹ This shift not only brought neoclassicism and historicism to the region but also ended the idealistic era of avant-garde modernism, which disappeared with the arrival of fascism in many European countries but survived in Czechoslovakia through World War II. Like many interpretations of

the early decades of East European communism, this narrative emphasizes the Soviet role in these developments and reinforces the notion of a schism between the interwar and postwar histories of the region.

In former Czechoslovakia, this received history has been especially alluring since interwar modern architecture is held in such high regard. There are world-class examples of cubist, constructivist, and functionalist buildings across the region. In the 1920s and 1930s, Czech and Slovak architects were connected to the international avant-garde through a network of Dutch, French, German, and Swiss designers, many of whom visited Prague during their travels through Central Europe.² They participated in international organizations such as CIAM (Congrès International d'Architecture Moderne, or the International Congress of Modern Architecture) and published journals and books highlighting their prolific production.³ The Baťa Shoe Company, famous for its interest in modern architecture, had its headquarters in Moravia, where the owners built a modern factory town with a state-of-the-art movie theater, department store, hotel, and skyscraper office tower.⁴ Many architectural historians who have written about Czechoslovak modernism have lamented the lack of a definitive history of Czechoslovak architecture in the interwar period.⁵ A number of excellent studies in Czech, Slovak, and English have recently closed this gap in the scholarship, however.⁶

To greater and lesser degrees, these studies propose that the historiography of the modern movement should return Czechoslovakia to its rightful place as one of the most outstanding sites of avant-garde architecture in the world. Scholars in the Czech Republic and Slovakia typically do this implicitly, offering extensive documentation of the massive production of Czech and Slovak modern architects. There have also been a number of exhibitions and accompanying catalogues that have made drawings and photographs of projects available.⁷ The studies written by émigré scholars or those written in the region for an international audience often have an overtly national tone, one that equates the end of communism with the restoration of the country's standing as a modern European nation. For example, in the introduction to his translation of Karel Teige's *The Minimum Dwelling*, Eric Dluhosch refers to "the liberation of Czech architecture from its Soviet imprisonment" after the "Iron Curtain was lifted by the Velvet Revolution."⁸

Building on the existing English-language scholarship in a 1993 essay, Kenneth Frampton summarized many of these widespread views:

Czechoslovakia has been largely ignored by Western European historians of the modern movement. While by no means the only Central European culture to be slighted by Western cultural history (Hungary was neglected to an equal degree), Czechoslovakia was certainly one of the most significant from the standpoint of twentieth-century modernization. When one looks back over half a century to

the country's modern movement, one cannot avoid being impressed by the way in which Czech modern architecture especially, together with a modern *modus vivendi*, became an expression that was seemingly embraced by the entire society. It was as if the spirit of modernity sustained by this culture embodied the very essence and identity of the new republic which had been created out of the ashes of the First World War and the ruined Habsburg Empire.⁹

Frampton ended the essay with a reflection on the intervening decades:

If any nation ever possessed the cultural and technical capacity to give Socialism a human face, it was this one. When one looks back at these historically modern but, after the passage of more than fifty years, now remote people, one cannot resist thinking of them as belonging to an innocent and vital modernist movement, one that has since become jaded and lost, destroyed on every side by the depredations of war and terror, and by a consumerism that knows no bounds and has no cultural *raison d'être*. One looks at them across the chasm of a vast and destructive time as embodying a hope: the promise that small and relatively prosperous nations may yet still realize a mediated modernity worthy of the name.¹⁰

For cultural historians of Czechoslovakia, this idealization of the First Republic (1918–1938) and its modern “essence” will be familiar. It was a theme that shaped much of the pre-1989 literature on twentieth-century Czechoslovakia by portraying the turn toward communism as a national tragedy.¹¹ It is only recently that a more complex picture of the 1920s, 1930s, and 1940s has begun to emerge.¹²

Within the field of architectural history, the result of this idealization of interwar architecture has been twofold. On the one hand, there remains a desire to uncover the fabled record of this “innocent and vital modernist movement,” hence the continued call for a definitive history despite the increasing number of comprehensive and competent studies on the topic. In 2005, curator and art historian Jaroslav Anděl remarked that a survey of “the modern movement in architecture in interwar Czechoslovakia... is long overdue.”¹³ Two years later, architect Eric J. Jenkins, writing in the journal *Cen-tropa*, conveyed his desire for “the still-missing, thorough history of Czechoslovak modern architecture between 1920 and 1946” that would give his research on Baťa architecture a “contextual discourse.”¹⁴ Given the long bibliography of journal articles, exhibition catalogues, and books in this text, this refrain seems to indicate a desire for something more than just a survey. It seems instead that some scholars are looking for a more tangible embrace of the Czech avant-garde by mainstream architectural historians in the “West,” which may require more than just a national survey to achieve.

On the other hand, the formulation of the communist period as, in Frampton's terms, a “vast and destructive time” creating an impassable “chasm” that distanced the “remote” people of the interwar period from those living in

the 1990s, has left the period between 1938 and 1989 largely unexplored. Many Czech scholars agree with this perspective and, preferring not to engage with questions of communism, have largely ignored the period.¹⁵ As Dluhosch's statement indicates, the general perception, especially among older scholars, is that architecture of the postwar period distorted and perverted the project of interwar modernism to such an extent that the buildings of the period became the "exact antithesis" of the "socialist paradise" promised by theorists such as Karel Teige.¹⁶ Journalist and architect Stephan Templ spoke even more directly to this point when he wrote in a 1999 exhibition catalogue that, at the end of the First Republic, "a half century of darkness was to descend: This was the end of the modern era."¹⁷

There are signs that this attitude may finally be fading as the generation of architectural historians trained after 1989 matures. Recently there have been several exhibitions, catalogues, and books on the postwar period focusing primarily on the architectural exceptions of the period, including single projects such as the Czechoslovak pavilion at Expo '58 in Brussels, the work of individual architecture offices such as the SIAL group in Liberec, or surveys of unique examples.¹⁸ Unlike those projects, this book considers what Dluhosch has described as the "endless drab rows of prefabricated boxes," the everyday architecture that constitutes much of the built environment of former Czechoslovakia.¹⁹

SITUATING THE PROJECT

This book is the result of attempts to filter, edit, and analyze an enormous collection of archival, primary source, and photographic material gathered in the Czech Republic and Slovakia from 2002 to 2008. One of the most important sources was the professional journal *Architektura ČSR* (Czechoslovak Architecture), published from 1939 to 1942 and from 1946 to 1990. Archival collections, unavailable to scholars until after 1989, were another critical component, along with many contemporary books, pamphlets, and publications that have received no scholarly attention until now. The results are uneven at times and simplifications had to be made in order to let the argument overtake the many details. What follows is, therefore, one path through these sources, rather than a definitive or final interpretation.

From the start, understanding the complex relationship between architects and the Communist Party was one of the most challenging aspects of this research. Many historians have assumed that the party was an oppressive force acting from outside to influence architectural production. The documents and texts utilized for this project reveal a different story. Architects were typically members of the party, and those who were not participated in a state apparatus organized on the principles of the planned economy. Thus,

architects who were not party members were still subject to the same professional standards and expectations as those who were. With few exceptions, all architects in early postwar Czechoslovakia, regardless of party membership status, conceived of their work in a materialist framework that emphasized buildings over architectural discourse in the sense that discourse was abstract and intangible. As quantitative indicators overtook the more creative aspects of their everyday work, they adapted to this new context by changing some of the criteria by which they judged their own work, finding satisfaction in providing for people's basic needs, such as housing.

This project is both a history of building typologies and an exploration of architectural practice. It chronicles changes in the profession following the transition to state socialism, when architects became technicians and industrial producers rather than artists or individual creators. In a purely stylistic analysis, the shift from the elegant forms of the interwar years to the crude and heavy constructions of the postwar period could be posited as the loss of an aesthetic sensibility or the forced imposition of socialist dogma in the realm of artistic production. This book argues, instead, that the change was a symptom of the broader postwar reconstitution of the cultural landscape, a recalibration of the relationship between creative practices and technological determinism. Starting just after the war and intensifying after 1948, the balance between these two competing interests tipped heavily in favor of technology, even during the era of socialist realism, when architectural research on standardized types continued without interruption. With this shift, architecture became part of the state apparatus, establishing a new set of priorities and goals for practitioners and making the autonomous expression of individual design intentions appear to be as intellectually misguided as free-market capitalism was in the realm of economics.

This scenario was not unique. A similar process of institutionalization in architecture and other professional disciplines occurred across the region.²⁰ This study of Czechoslovakia, therefore, contributes broadly to the historical understanding of socialism and the mechanisms at work within the state to manage the new system. At the same time, however, it is important to recognize that each of the Eastern Bloc countries was the product of a particular historical formation. Although they shared similar external pressures from the Soviet Union, common social and economic goals, and comparable systems of governance, each country moved along the path toward socialism at a different pace and with unique local conditions. Rather than focusing on the similarities within the bloc, a strategy common among nonspecialists and regional specialists looking for general patterns, this project focuses on the particularities of Czechoslovakia and draws its conclusions from local events and decisions. From an architectural standpoint, Czechoslovakia is an excel-

lent case study in the region because of its unique nexus of preexisting technological capacity, minimal war damage, and skilled architects who survived the war and stayed in the country.

The time period covered in this book is roughly bracketed by the start of the Košice Program in 1945 and the end of the Second Five-Year Plan in 1960. The point is not that 1945 and 1960 were the beginning and end of a linear trajectory but that these events are points of entry and exit along a continuum of architectural modernism in Czechoslovakia. The text emphasizes 1950, rather than 1945 or 1948, as the most significant turning point for postwar architecture and shows how the transformations that occurred over time were in no way a foregone conclusion when the Communist Party first came to power. The changes resulted from the colliding interests of three groups: the older generation, who were attempting to reconcile their vision of the modern project with that of the new regime; ambitious young architects, educated after the war and eager to satisfy the whims of their superiors; and architectural bureaucrats who struggled to fulfill the ever-increasing demands for housing and other utilitarian buildings in the planned economy. Since architecture is always a product of larger cultural, political, economic, and social systems, this book also contributes to the broader historical discussion about a reperiodization of transition and change in postwar Czechoslovakia.²¹

This book addresses three primary methodological issues that reflect disciplinary tensions in the field of architectural history and the preoccupations of scholars writing about various aspects of European communism. First, this work reveals the value of untapped historical resources that lay dormant in what one might call the gaps between disciplinary interests. This material, both archival and bibliographic, lies beyond traditional scholarly boundaries dictating what is and is not acceptable source material in a given discipline. Thus, in addition to typical textual resources for architectural historians, such as journals, books, and personal papers, the sources utilized include materials from government archives and ministerial and administrative files. These little-explored sources help to expose the intricate web of ministries, administrations, committees, and institutes that defined the socialist landscape in the Eastern Bloc.

Second, it is essential to reconsider the top-down, monolithic image of the Communist Party as the single entity driving cultural production. This simplistic dichotomy of the party on one side and the oppressed producers of culture on the other dissolves when one reexamines the multilayered mechanisms of interaction and negotiation between these two spheres. The research for this work has revealed that, for many architects, remaining or becoming a member of the Communist Party in 1945 or 1948 was an expression of long-held political beliefs about the potential of a socialist society and

not just a status adopted out of fear or by force. Much of this early enthusiasm was dampened in later years, but the architecture of the late 1940s and even the 1950s must be seen in the context of this initial hopefulness.

Finally, this book implicitly challenges methodologies, still common in art and architectural history, that privilege formal and aesthetic criteria over process-driven observations that seek to make connections between objects and the cultural contexts in which they were produced. This reduced reliance on aesthetic criteria necessarily diminishes the importance of conclusions about artistic quality, or what can crudely be characterized as judging between beauty and ugliness. Such subjective determinations are only useful inasmuch as they reveal something about the priorities—be they aesthetic, functional, or technological—of the society in which an object was made and of the critic or historian engaging in the discussion.

With these methodological priorities in place, other questions receive only cursory treatment, for example, whether or not these buildings were formally successful—this is purposefully not a history of architectural styles—or even whether or not people liked living in them. These are valid questions. However, they would be best answered by a different type of study, one based on other methods and assumptions. The objects of study here are not the buildings themselves but rather how they were constitutive of the political, organizational, and professional systems within which they were conceived and built. Czechoslovakia was a country with a strong aesthetic tradition and well-developed building industry, yet within one professional generation it underwent a total transformation, as standardization and typification replaced an older model of individual commissions. This book attempts to explain why and how this transformation occurred.

CZECHOSLOVAKIA IN 1945

The architectural developments discussed in this book must be situated within a specific and unique context. Despite scholars' tendency to describe the Eastern Bloc as a homogeneous region, each of its countries had different histories and wartime experiences. Thus, they came out of the war with distinct problems, strengths, and levels of legitimacy. Although the nostalgic desire for the peace of the interwar republic and the country's relative lack of physical and economic damage during the war positioned Czechoslovakia to emerge from the occupation more quickly than neighboring Poland and Germany, hindsight reveals that this fragmented and depleted environment was the perfect incubator for state socialism.

The Košice Program, drafted in Moscow under Soviet supervision in April 1945, set out a new framework for postwar governance and determined much about the immediate postwar experiences of the country's inhabitants.

Representatives of four Czech and two Slovak political parties participated in drafting the program, and these six political parties together became known as the National Front. The Czech parties included the Communists, whose leaders had spent the war in Moscow; the weakened Social Democrats, who would soon merge with the Communists; the Czech National Socialists, the party of President Edvard Beneš; and the centrist People's Party, which had been Catholic but agreed to take a nondenominational stance after the Moscow negotiations.²² The Slovaks sent representatives of the Slovak Democratic Party and the Slovak Communist Party, but the more powerful populist and rightist Slovak parties were absent.²³ With Communist support, Edvard Beneš was reelected president in the new coalition government, and democratic general elections were scheduled for 1946.²⁴

The Košice Program was wide ranging and ambitious. Economically, its immediate goals were the nationalization of large industries and the redistribution of confiscated German, Jewish, and Hungarian property to Czechs and Slovaks.²⁵ All "rightist" political parties were banned immediately "for collaborating with the Nazi regime." This, of course, was facilitated by the parties' lack of representation at the meeting. As a largely socialist coalition, the National Front supported "a long list of social rights, including the right to employment, vacation, medical care, and old age insurance."²⁶ Slovaks were recognized as a "distinct nation," but their request for sovereignty in a federalized state was rejected, a decision that would continue to influence Czech-Slovak relations into the 1990s. The program called for popularly elected national committees to be formed at the local, district, and regional levels "to administer public affairs."²⁷ This form of governance was described as a "people's democracy."²⁸ From the start, these committees had disproportionately high Communist Party representation and played an important part in the state apparatus.²⁹

The six months following the adoption of the Košice Program came to be known as the "National Revolution."³⁰ Despite the preeminent position of the Communist Party in the initial Moscow negotiations, the political rhetoric of the National Revolution did not include blatantly Marxist language. Historian Bradley Abrams notes that, at the time, the Communist Party did not demand "the wholesale transplantation of Soviet culture onto Czech and Slovak consciousness."³¹ Abrams shows, instead, that after the May 1945 liberation, Communist Party intellectuals formulated an argument that emphasized "patriotism, national traditions, [and] the progressive quality of the national character" as the foundations of the party's legitimacy.³² The party purposefully chose to build their base of support through local and regional initiatives in anticipation of the upcoming general elections rather than start their campaign with aggressive language borrowed from the Soviets. These

efforts were rewarded in May 1946, when the Communist Party received 40 percent of the popular vote in the Czech lands and 30 percent in Slovakia; combined, the party's take was almost 38 percent of the total.³³ It was only then that they came forward with the "political strategy" of the "Czechoslovak road to socialism," which emphasized the basis of socialism in the progressive Czech national character.³⁴ In the rhetoric, this progressive character was put in opposition to the fascism of the German and Hungarian peoples and the perceived backwardness of the Soviets.

A "genuine coalition" government ruled in Czechoslovakia until February 1948.³⁵ It oversaw an economic recovery, the massive transfers of large populations, and the creation of a Czech and Slovak nation-state, which constructed its identity in opposition to the free-market capitalism and multinational composition of the interwar republic. As an occupied territory safe from Allied bombing until late in the war, Czechoslovakia had suffered less physical and economic damage in World War II than many European countries.³⁶ Ground battles occurred away from major urban centers and disproportionately in Slovak territory, which was more rural and less industrialized.³⁷ Although specific Czech factories were bombed, including the Baťa Works in Zlín, the Vítkovice Iron Works in Ostrava, and the Škoda Works in Plzeň, the damage in the Czech lands was contained and reversible.³⁸ Some economists have even claimed that the country was enriched by the war.³⁹ By the end of the Two-Year Plan in December 1948, the economy had almost reached 1937 levels and exceeded those with respect to "national income, transportation, and industrial production, which were higher by 10 percent." The building sector, however, was one of the worst performers, fulfilling only 66 percent of its targets; agriculture reached 80 percent.⁴⁰

Despite these circumstances, it would be incorrect to argue that the country emerged from the war unscathed. In his assessment of the overall health of the Czechoslovak economy in 1945, economist Jan Michal described other types of destruction that occurred, including "the reckless wartime depletion of natural resources, the great distortion of the pattern of output, employment, and trade, and the disruption of the monetary system, in addition to physical destruction and losses in territory and population."⁴¹ Food was in short supply across the country, with rations as low as 1,300 calories a day in May 1945, increasing to 1,800 calories by the end of the year, but still remaining below the "desirable level" through the 1940s.⁴² The far eastern region of the country, Subcarpathian Ruthenia, was ceded to the Soviet Union at the end of the war, resulting in the loss of territory and 850,000 inhabitants.⁴³ The Jewish population was also decimated, through emigration and extermination in concentration camps. Only 44,000 of the 356,000 people who identified their religion as "Jewish" in the 1930 census remained in the country by

1945. Many of those who stayed then left in 1948, with another wave of emigration in 1968. By 1980, only 9,000 Jews lived in Czechoslovakia.⁴⁴

The most significant loss of population was due to the expulsion of citizens determined to be of German descent. In 1945 and 1946, three million people were forcefully expelled from the country as a form of war retribution and for what, at the time, was justified as a national security measure.⁴⁵ The earliest and most violent expulsions occurred in the summer of 1945. These came to be known as the “wild transfers,” when in just a few months more than seven hundred thousand Sudeten Germans were “herded” by Czechs into Nazi-style “concentration and labor camps...where as many as 30,000 Germans died.”⁴⁶ During 1946, the remaining German population was transported to German territory in a more orderly fashion, but they were forced to leave with few possessions and no compensation for their property or assets.⁴⁷

As a result of these combined population losses, Czechoslovakia’s population shrank dramatically, from 15.9 million in May 1945 to only slightly more than 12 million in December 1946.⁴⁸ Many Jews and Germans had owned or managed industrial, banking, and commercial operations. The loss of most of those populations, together with the reduction of the skilled labor pool and the depletion of the industrial knowledge base, contributed to extreme labor shortages that were evident after the war and would continue to plague the country for decades.⁴⁹

The social and cultural consequences of the war proved to be the most destructive. In 1939, 70 percent of the population of Bohemia, Moravia, and Silesia was Czech; by 1950, this number had grown to 94 percent.⁵⁰ As historian Nancy Wingfield has shown, the loss of the country’s long-established German community created the need to construct a “new collective memory” for the country, one that “used socially organized forgetting—exclusion, suppression, and repression—on the one hand, and socially organized remembering—the deliberate invention, emphasis, and popularization of elements of consciousness—on the other...to legitimate the new ‘purer’ postwar Czechoslovak nation-state.”⁵¹ Beyond the outright anti-German propaganda common in political rhetoric, aspects of forgetting included changing building, street, and city names from German to Czech; removing monuments related to German historical figures; and forbidding the use of the term “Sudeten” after May 1945.⁵² The construction of this “new collective memory” focused largely on unifying the Czech and Slovak peoples, whose histories and wartime experiences were distinct. Within architecture, this new collective memory was created by emphasizing the shared vernacular heritage of the region and by highlighting the modernizing character of Czech and Slovak architecture in the interwar period.⁵³

In addition to the loss of the German population, there was a large trans-

fer of Czechs and Slovaks from the interior of the country to the “borderlands,” the Czech term for the Sudetenland, where they were promised property confiscated from Germans and Jews, including businesses and homes. According to historian Adrian von Arburg, between 1945 and 1950, 25 percent of all Czechs left their homes and “tried to build a new existence in the borderlands.”⁵⁴ As part of the Košice Program, the Communist Party gained control of the Ministry of the Interior, which was responsible for organizing the resettlement of the borderlands. The ministry opened what they called the Settlement Office (Osídlovací úřad) in the fall of 1945 to oversee these activities. Due in part to the association of the Communist Party with the resettlement efforts, a significant portion of the Communist Party’s support in the 1946 general elections came from this region.⁵⁵

One of the most serious obstacles to this population shift to the borderlands was the lack of housing. Although there were as many as 640,000 apartments and houses in the government’s possession by 1946, some belonged to Czechs returning to the area, some were primitive even by interwar standards, and others suffered war damage and needed reconstruction.⁵⁶ Historian Zdeněk Radvanovský writes that this “catastrophic lack of housing” was “a burning problem for practically all new settlers,” many of whom had to live with friends, in hotels, or in makeshift accommodations.⁵⁷ To alleviate the crisis in this critical industrial area, many of the postwar government’s early housing initiatives focused on this region, where housing shortages would continue into the 1950s.⁵⁸ The cities around Ostrava suffered similar problems since the housing stock in that area was depleted and the coal mining and steel industries began expanding rapidly after the war. Given these circumstances, architects quickly recognized the crucial role the profession could play in the future development of the country.

1 • PHOENIX RISING

Housing and the Early Debates on Socialist Modernity

We are practically the only civilized state in the world that has yet to devote itself to the scientific study of the housing question. This is one of the most important elements of social politics, of the care of the physical and moral health of the nation, and economically, it is the most significant segment of the building industry. Block of Progressive Architectural Associations, 1945

On the night of July 17, 1945, just two months after Czechoslovakia's liberation from Nazi occupation, architects gathered in the main hall of the Central Library in Prague for the first public meeting of the newly established Block of Progressive Architectural Associations (Blok architektonických pokrokových spolků, henceforth BAPS). Although the professional journal *Architektura ČSR* (Czechoslovak Architecture) listed the names of more than thirty architects who had lost their lives in concentration camps or in resistance fighting, the close-knit professional community regrouped with most of its leaders alive and in Czechoslovakia.¹ Among the speakers that evening were leading left-wing architects of the interwar period such as Jaroslav Fragner, Karel Janů, Václav Hlinský, Jiří Kroha, and Oldřich Starý. In twelve speeches, the group announced its platform, including demands for reform in the building industry, public support for the construction of housing units, and the creation of a “single organization for architect-designers in Czechoslovakia.”² In a statement that foretold something of the profession's future institutionalization, they also declared the full “cooperation of architects in the construction of the state” after the “liberation of [their] homeland.”³

Like the mythical Egyptian phoenix, the avant-garde architectural movement in Czechoslovakia emerged with new vigor from war and occupation. Its members had spent years out of work, under surveillance, in hiding, and, in some cases, in concentration camps. To the delight of most architects, Czechoslovakia's political and intellectual climate had moved far to the left by 1945 as a response to fascism and what Czechs and Slovaks perceived as the betrayal of their country by antisocialist Western powers at Munich in 1938.⁴ They saw a future in the creation of strong institutions, not only governmental but also social, cultural, and professional. This new environment gave the leadership of BAPS and its constitutive groups, including the dominant Union of Socialist Architects (*Svaz socialistických architektů*), the opportunity to pursue their long-sought goal of reorganizing the mechanisms of architectural design and construction along a collective model.

From the start, the group's progressive architectural vision was tied to the optimistic political rhetoric of the Left and, in particular, the Communist Party. Within cultural and intellectual circles, the changing political climate opened new possibilities to secure widespread support for interwar polemics on the need for mass housing, overturning the class structure, and exposing the nature of capitalist excess and exploitation.⁵ Demands for the nationalization of the building industry, which had seemed naive in the 1930s, were now met with support from the profession and the government as part of a larger nationalization program.⁶ If the war represented a temporary obstacle to this campaign, then the rising political power of the Communist Party and the establishment of BAPS signaled that the time was finally right for this vision to come to fruition.

Between May 1945 and September 1948, when Stavoprojekt, a state-run system of architecture and engineering offices, was established, the course of architectural design in Czechoslovakia was not predetermined, highly controlled, or influenced by the socialist realist method employed in the Soviet Union. In formal terms, the work of this period was modern and followed interwar preferences for unadorned surfaces, volumetric massing, and industrial components. Experimentation and innovation were widespread, especially in the areas of new materials and the use of standardized building elements. Projects with ambitious programs and large budgets resulted from government initiatives providing new work opportunities for architects. At the beginning, this work focused primarily on basic reconstruction, transportation infrastructure, and industrial capacity, much of which was done by engineers rather than architects.⁷

With the announcement of the Two-Year Plan in the summer of 1946, which included the target of 125,000 new housing units by 1948, architects began to receive commissions for civic and residential projects, mostly from

Communist-led ministries.⁸ These projects were often funded jointly with nationalized industries and the public administrative bodies called national committees, creating a model of public-private partnership that would be influential in future developments. Together with the far-left political stance of BAPS, these commissions—and the creative freedom they offered—generated genuine enthusiasm within the profession for both the nationalization process and increased state control over the economy.

Housing was one of the most fertile areas of architectural innovation in this transitional period. Damaged cities needed emergency housing units to start the process of reconstruction and newly nationalized industries required more housing units to attract new workers. BAPS focused much of its attention on promoting architects as experts who would solve the housing crisis through research, analysis, and planning.⁹ During the chaotic years of the Great Depression and the war, mass housing initiatives had been local, individual, and often privately funded, which meant that few projects were ever completed, and those that succeeded were often at the scale of a single building.¹⁰

According to BAPS, the solution to this crisis was the consolidation of professional and material resources—collective work executed to regulated standards—as well as a clearly articulated agenda for architectural practice that established the architect as a critical and indispensable voice in the debates about a new Czechoslovak society. State support was crucial to these goals, and one of the group's earliest demands was the creation of government institutes to investigate aspects of the building industry such as housing strategies, prefabrication, the economics of construction, building standards, and the relationship of people to the natural environment.¹¹ Although the institutes as such would not be created before 1948, the organizational model of the research institute and the concept of scientific inquiry as the basis of architectural practice would become the foundation for later incarnations of the socialist design sector.

The activities of BAPS and the housing projects undertaken from 1945 to 1948 reveal how the profession, reemerging after the war, created a new model of architectural practice that emphasized expert knowledge and collective action over artistic expression and individual gain. The establishment of BAPS, and the leading role of the Union of Socialist Architects in the organization, was evidence that the architectural profession had already started the transformation from capitalist to socialist practice even before the Communist takeover, however willing or unwilling members were to abide by the changes as events unfolded.¹² In particular, the 1945 proposals put forward by BAPS illustrated the enthusiasm for socialism that was already present among many Czech and Slovak architects.

In their formulation of architecture as a scientific and quantitative pursuit,

the leadership of BAPS also connected their platform with the polemics and debates of the 1930s, which were positioned as the first steps in the progressive development of Czechoslovak modernism toward socialist architecture. Mapping these continuities in architectural thinking, as well as in personalities, is critical to an understanding of postwar architecture in Czechoslovakia. Although historians have long characterized either 1938 or 1945 as the break between high modernism and what came after, an analysis of these connections shows that, in technological and formal terms, architecture did not change much in this period. In fact, there was some solace for architects in returning to the regularity of their professional lives after the disruption of war.

Within this framework, the five years between the end of the war and the implementation of the socialist realist method appear to have been a time of hopeful ideological consolidation. During these years, many architects rallied behind a socialist agenda in an attempt to influence the future development of the design professions and the building industry as a whole. Through these efforts, the far-left technocratic position espoused by the most radical factions of the 1930s became mainstream and then dominant. Unfortunately for many, however, the dream of a transformative modern architecture soon became corrupted by the very political system within which it was conceived. Although the architectural forms of the late 1940s would reappear less than a decade later during Khrushchev's "thaw," the optimism of the early postwar years proved much harder to recapture; these years would be the among the happiest for practitioners of socialist architecture in Czechoslovakia.

THE ARCHITECTURAL LEGACY OF THE INTERWAR PERIOD

The vision of architectural practice that emerged after the war in Czechoslovakia was influenced in large part by the debates and experiences of the avant-garde in Europe and America in the 1920s and 1930s. For most of the nineteenth century, architects were viewed as individual creative artists working in an autonomous sphere. Starting in the late nineteenth century and accelerating after World War I with initiatives such as the Bauhaus in Germany and the skyscraper boom in the United States, the cultural role of the profession began to change. The conservative model of the classically trained Beaux-Arts master suddenly seemed old-fashioned. In its place emerged the "modern" architect who was technologically adept, attuned to economic demands, current with stylistic trends, and often highly politicized, with the vast majority espousing left-wing views. In the wake of Czechoslovakia's creation in 1918, architects embraced this new model of practice, working in a series of modern styles, from rondocubism, constructivism, purism, and rationalism to various strands of functionalism. Modernism flourished as the new country searched for a cultural identity that expressed what it perceived to be its modern, indus-

trial, and politically progressive character.¹³ Functionalist projects such as Karel Hannauer's Arosa Pension from 1931 and Josef Havlíček and Karel Honzík's General Pension Institute from 1929–1934, both in Prague, show the high quality of built examples in Czechoslovakia (figs. 1.1 and 1.2).

The left-wing artists' collective, Devětsil, founded by fourteen Prague artists in 1920, was one of the most important groups in this cultural scene. Its membership of almost one hundred included leading figures in art, photography, literature, theater, film, and architecture.¹⁴ According to historian Thomas Ort, the members of Devětsil shared two constants: communism and the desire to overcome the autonomy of the aesthetic sphere. He writes that "nearly all of Devětsil's members joined the Communist Party in the 1920s or were close sympathizers. Much of Devětsil's art was tendentious; that is, it was meant to be political even when it lacked explicit ideological content. The group's spokesmen did not acknowledge a substantive distinction between politics and art."¹⁵

Critic and historian Karel Teige was among Devětsil's founders, and he soon became its primary spokesman. In 1922, Teige formulated a more radical position for the group in the context of international constructivism, calling for the "negation of art" and the embrace of the "machine character of modern life." He "reasoned that everything—all forms of life—would have to submit to the rational, utilitarian, and efficient rule of the machine . . . imagin[ing] a world in which technology supplanted art and engineers replaced artists as the stewards of beauty."¹⁶ The following year, after a trip to Paris, where he met with Le Corbusier and other leading French avant-gardists, he and poet Vítěslav Nezval formulated poetism, a new kind of expression that literary scholar Peter Zusi describes as liberating "art from the confines of the museums and cathedrals," leading "not simply onto the streets, [but] into the city, and onto the stage of modern life." According to Zusi, the dialectical tension between these two tendencies—rational and expressive—was at



FIG. 1.1. KAREL HANNAUER, AROSA PENSION, PRAGUE, 1931.



FIG. 1.2. JOSEF HAVLÍČEK AND KAREL HONZÍK, GENERAL PENSION INSTITUTE, PRAGUE, 1929–1934.

the heart of Teige's "totalizing vision" for functionalism, a theme in his writings for another decade.¹⁷ Although Teige's positions changed so quickly in the 1920s that it remains difficult to make any definitive interpretations of his overarching point of view, it is clear that his ideas about functionalism were evolving, becoming more utilitarian and rational by the mid-1920s as his radical politics superseded his interest in the expressive qualities of poetism.¹⁸

As promoted by Teige and his supporters in Prague and Brno in the late 1920s, this new theory, which would come to be called scientific functionalism, shared its ideological basis with Russian and Swiss constructivism, especially as practiced by the Soviet OSA group (Union of Contemporary Architects: Moisei Ginzburg, Ignati Milinis, Vesnin Brothers, Ivan Leonidov) and the multinational group associated with the Swiss journal *ABC* (architects Hannes Meyer, Hans Schmidt, Mart Stam, and Hans Wittwer, and artist El Lissitzky). Teige visited the Soviet Union in 1925 and became a well-known expert on Soviet architecture, although he became disillusioned with the Soviet Union after Boris Iofan's neoclassical design won the Palace

of the Soviets competition in 1932.¹⁹ Of all his international contacts during this period, Teige and his followers most admired Meyer, who, as director of the Bauhaus, invited Teige to deliver a series of lectures on sociology at the school in 1930, just before Meyer was fired, whereupon he immigrated to the Soviet Union.²⁰

Architectural historian Rostislav Šváchá identifies three distinct phases of Teige's scientific functionalism: an interest in "economic" or "physical" science, from 1922 to 1928; a "sociological" phase, from 1928 to 1936; and a turn toward surrealism and "psychoanalytical" and "biological science," from 1936 to 1948, when he largely abandoned architecture as a subject of intellectual inquiry.²¹ The common link between the first two phases was what Šváchá describes as a belief in "architecture as science—as a positive opposite of creation based on subjectivity."²² He notes, however, that Teige's understanding of scientific functionalism depended in large part on his definition of science, which he intentionally left vague. Šváchá proposes a meaning that equates science with the laboratory:

Until the thirties, if not longer, Teige identified science with activity which is conducted in a laboratory, with laboratory work. . . . The scientific nature of laboratory work lies not only in the fact that the work is exact, rational and methodical, but also in the fact that it is work based on experiments, on verifying theories, hypotheses, prognoses, utopias, "scientifically" supported plans. . . . However, laboratory work is also scientific in the fact that it is "*pure*" work, independent of the often unfavorable conditions in capitalist society and of customer orders, which would corrupt and deform the pure solution of an architectural problem in all sorts of ways.²³

Teige promoted this "pure" work as a foil to the oppressive nature of capitalism, which he saw as point of origin for the economic and social problems cities experienced during the Great Depression.

Perhaps as a manifestation of Teige's own struggle to come to terms with the rational and the expressive, another theory of functionalism developed within Devětsil in the 1920s. Its proponents, including Karel Honzík, Jaromír Krejcar, and Evžen Linhart, called it "emotional functionalism." They wanted architecture to consider not only "people's physical needs" but also "the demands of human emotions."²⁴ Šváchá writes that "the 'scientists' talked about science, technology, laboratories, and exactness, and the 'emotionalists' about art, poetry, spiritual needs." He goes on to argue that the differences were largely theoretical, because the buildings designed by the architects involved in these debates were not demonstrably different from one another. Instead, he writes, the clearest way to distinguish the two groups was in relation to the architects they idolized—Le Corbusier for the emotional functionalists and the Soviet OSA group and the *ABC* architects for the scien-

tific functionalists.²⁵ The difference might also be described as modern architecture that privileged aesthetics versus modern architecture that privileged utility, but still formally “modern” in both cases.

This internal divide within Devětsil was exposed in the international press when Teige published his now well-known critique of Le Corbusier’s 1929 Mundaneum project. As part of a wider campaign against the project led by Meyer, Stam, and Lissitzky, Teige publicly objected to Le Corbusier’s use of classical proportions and monumental forms in the design for a museum complex, leading to a published rebuttal by Le Corbusier that defended the role of aesthetics in modern architecture.²⁶ The disagreement set the terms of a larger debate that continued for decades within modernist circles.²⁷ In the wake of this episode and other creative and political differences, Devětsil disbanded in 1931.²⁸

Former Devětsil members and other modernist architects splintered into multiple factions. Some left radical politics behind and pursued commissions for wealthy clients and the government. Teige and other loyalists, including Jan Gillar and Oldřich Starý, continued to argue for “sociological” scientific functionalism. In 1932, Teige wrote his treatise, *Nejmenší byt* (*The Minimum Dwelling*), on the ills of capitalism and the housing crisis. It developed out of Teige’s participation in the early meetings of the International Congress of Modern Architecture (or CIAM), a group formed by Siegfried Giedion and Le Corbusier in 1928 to protect the global interests of modern architects.²⁹ The book and its searing critique of liberal notions of social housing became a rallying point for the young generation of recently graduated Marxist architects, many of whom were active in left-wing groups such as the architectural section of the Left Front (Levá fronta), founded in 1929, and the Union of Socialist Architects, founded after the first Congress of Left Architects (Sjezd levých architektů), in October 1932.³⁰ The first president of the Union of Socialist Architects was Jiří Kroha, an outspoken Communist Party member and professor at the Brno University of Technology. He would become the most powerful architect in the country for a few years in the early 1950s.³¹

By the mid-1930s, Teige’s position had started to erode. His lack of professional credentials (he was trained as an art historian), his untempered Marxist rhetoric, and his repudiation of middle-class values, including traditional marriage and the role of women as domestic caretakers, meant that he remained a provocative but increasingly marginal character among mainstream modern architects.³² Alarmed by the imposition of socialist realism in the Soviet Union, Teige wrote a critique of Soviet architecture in 1936 that, in the spirit of the Mundaneum debate, criticized monumentality as “an instrument of power used by the ruling class to subject and intimidate a degraded and deceived people.”³³ By that time, his main preoccupations were surrealism and psychoanalysis. After the war, he wrote the introduction to Ladislav

Žák's 1947 book, *Obytná krajina* (The Inhabited Landscape), incorporating aspects of surrealism into his polemic.³⁴ The same year, he also prepared another version of his history of modern architecture in Czechoslovakia, a text he had been working on in various forms since 1924.³⁵ The 1947 publication was commissioned by the Communist-controlled Ministry of Information and prepared for international distribution in English and French.³⁶ Teige died in 1951. By that time, his decades-long criticism of the Soviet Union, his lifelong refusal to join the Communist Party, and the souring of many of his personal and professional relationships had left him ostracized and out of favor with the Communist regime. His legacy, however, carried on through the young architects he had inspired in the early 1930s.

THE ARCHITECTURAL WORKING GROUP

Although it was not clear in the 1930s, the line of architectural thinking from the interwar period that would have the most significant impact on post-war developments was Teige's highly rationalized formulation of scientific functionalism. His ideas were propagated by the Architectural Working Group (Pracovní architektonická skupina), a collaboration between three architects who were followers of Teige—Karel Janů, Jiří Štursa, and Jiří Voženílek. Younger than Teige and the Devětsil architects by more than ten years, they were classmates at Prague's Technical University in the late 1920s and joined the architectural section of the Left Front in 1930. Their strident Marxism and vocal support for Soviet housing types such as the *koldom* and urban planning models such as Nikolai Miliutin's linear city put them on the far left of Prague's leftist circles at the time. Their 1932–1933 plan for the neighborhoods of Čakovice and Letňany in northeast Prague, like Miliutin's project for Stalingrad from 1930, proposed parallel, continuous corridors of industry, residences, transportation, and green space instead of traditional urban development patterns (fig. 1.3). For the Congress of Left Architects in 1932, the Architectural Working Group wrote a text heavily indebted to Teige and titled "Scientific Methods of Architectural Work."³⁷ In 1933, they followed with a book outlining principles for socialist architecture.³⁸ The basis of their position lay in the belief that "the industrialization of the building industry" and "the principles of scientific methods" were essential to making architecture "a component of scientifically governed production and the distribution of vital means."³⁹ Following Teige's argument from his 1932 book, *Nejmenší byt* (*The Minimum Dwelling*), they believed that this goal could not be achieved without a radical change in the current economic and political system.

The Architectural Working Group would expand in the mid-1930s to include Oldřich Stibor and Vlasta Štursová, Jiří Štursa's wife, who was on the executive committee of the Union of Socialist Architects. After 1936, however,

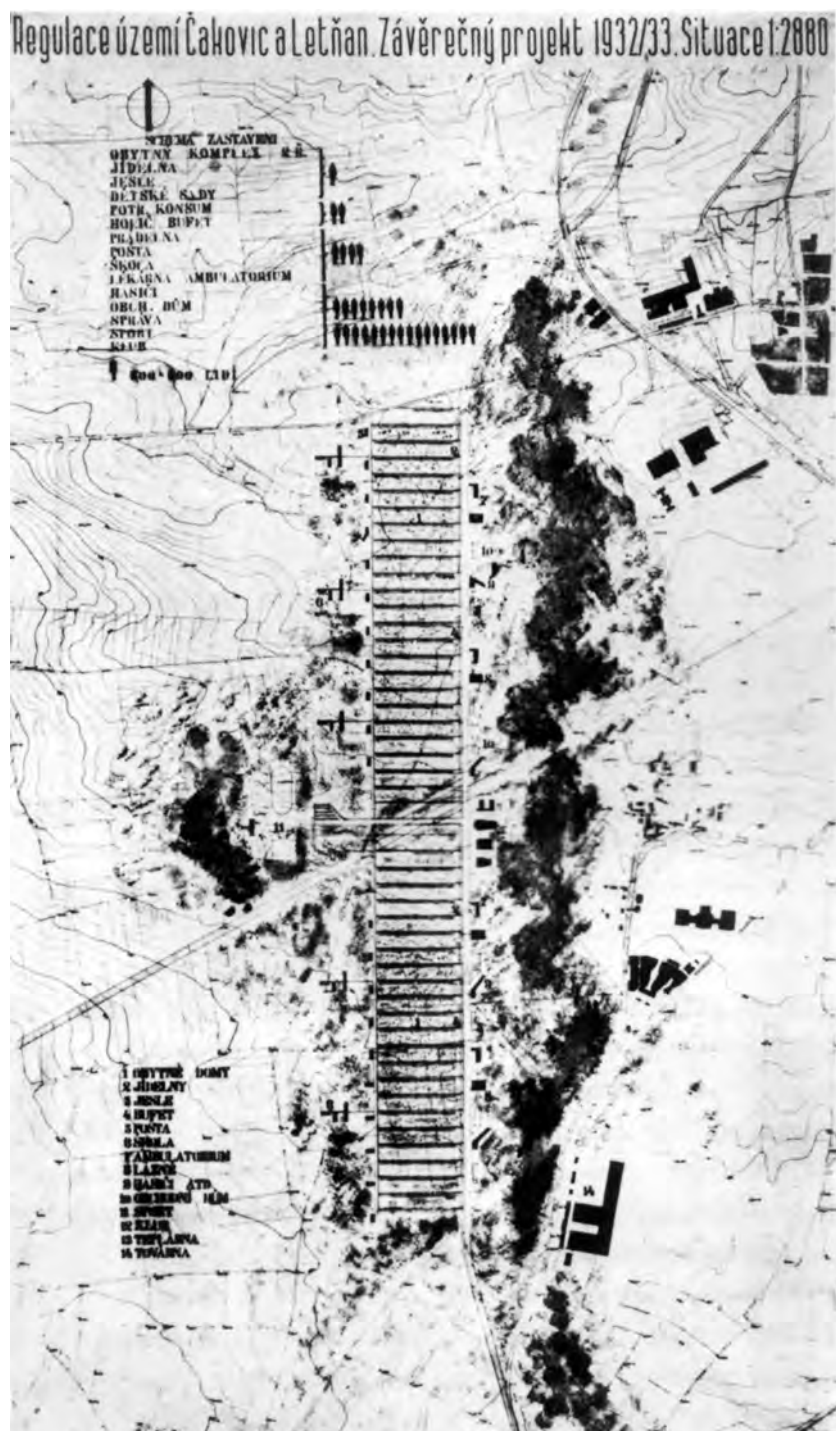


FIG. 1.3. ARCHITECTURAL WORKING GROUP, REGIONAL PLAN FOR ČAKOVÍCE AND LETŇANY, PRAGUE, 1932–1933.

the group was less active as a collective, with members pursuing outside commissions for houses and apartment buildings individually or in pairs.⁴⁰ This diminishing group cohesion may have been directly connected to Teige, who shifted his efforts from architecture to surrealism around the same time and therefore could no longer be a strong mentor. It may also have been the result of Jiří Voženílek's departure from Prague. He left to take a job in the design offices of the Baťa Shoe Company in Zlín in 1937, the same year that Vladimír Karfík completed his famous Baťa skyscraper. This surprising move—leaving a left-wing artists' collective to join a company that was one of the most recognizable symbols of interwar capitalism—is not easily explained other than by speculating that Voženílek wanted the security of a full-time job after years with little work. As it turned out, the move was a fateful decision because once the war broke out, he became a leader in the left-wing resistance in Zlín and eventually parlayed his position at Baťa into a key appointment in the postwar administration.

In the late 1930s, no one, including the members of the Architectural Working Group themselves, could have imagined that they would be among the most powerful architects in Czechoslovakia after the war. Janů would lead the Czechoslovak Building Works, the corporation created after the 1948 nationalization of the building industry. After the entity's dissolution in 1951, he studied housing prototypes at a research institute until becoming the country's deputy minister of building in 1956.⁴¹ In 1948, Voženílek would become the first director of Stavoprojekt, the state-run system of architecture offices created to replace private practice. After 1951, he led a research institute on architecture and urbanism before being appointed deputy minister of the State Committee for Construction in 1956.⁴² Štursa stayed closer to design work, serving as the author of two housing developments in the Model Housing Development Program in the late 1940s.⁴³ With his wife, he also designed the site plan and architectural foundations for Otakar Švec's winning entry to the Stalin Monument competition in 1950.⁴⁴ He was on the faculty at the Technical University in Prague for several decades, serving as director of the Architecture Department during the politically treacherous period from 1952 to 1954.⁴⁵ Oldřich Stibor became the architectural representative at the State Planning Office (Státní úřad plánovací), which was responsible for writing the Five-Year Plan and ensuring its fulfillment.⁴⁶ These prestigious appointments resulted not only from the Architectural Working Group's activities in the 1930s but also their work from 1944 to 1948, when they formally aligned themselves with the Communist Party and took leadership positions in the government and in public design projects.

Given Teige's problematic relationship with the regime after the war and his outspoken dislike for the hierarchical structure of the Communist Party,

there is a sad irony in the elevation of his most dedicated supporters to these high positions after 1948. Perhaps due in part to the Architectural Working Group's problematic role in the postwar regime, Švábka is highly critical of their formulation of scientific functionalism in the 1930s. He writes, "Most of the Architectural Working Group texts appear to be the work of thinkers lost to technocratism, superficial mechanical materialism and vulgar sociology, precisely the kind which asserted itself in the thirties in the Soviet humanities. The pataphysical character of Janů's, Štursa's and Voženílek's writings was reinforced by various diagrams, drawn charts and graphs, with which the architects wanted to reinforce the exactness and objectivity of their scientific deductions."⁴⁷ He goes on to say that the Architectural Working Group made something "vulgar" out of Teige's "theoretical heritage" by "caricaturing" his ideas.⁴⁸ Others might argue that, in the end, it was Teige's position itself that was "vulgar." However one chooses to characterize their theoretical positions, the members of the Architectural Working Group attempted to implement Teige's utopian conception of the minimum dwelling in a socialist society in the mid-1930s. Although Teige himself had moved beyond these ideas after the war and did not support the regime that the Architectural Working Group was a part of, the members were faithful to their position that the industrialization of the building industry and the use of scientific methods were the most critical components of socialist architectural practice.

BAPS AND POSTWAR ARCHITECTURAL PRACTICE

The reconstitution of the architectural profession, its alliance with the National Front government, and its desire to work with the state must be framed within the historical context of the mid-1940s in Czechoslovakia. From the end of the war until the Communist takeover in February 1948, the country's economy was regaining its footing, largely through government intervention and a massive nationalization program. Socialism was popular, and the state was perceived as a stabilizing and benevolent entity. Like Communist Party representatives in the National Front government who used their wartime activities to gain legitimacy, those architects who had been loyal to the socialist cause during the war emerged as the leading voices of the professional community. In 1944, while the country was still occupied, the former members of the Architectural Working Group reunited and joined with Otakar Nový to serve as the building commission of the clandestine Central Council of Trade Unions (Ústřední rady odborů or ÚRO).⁴⁹ The Communist-led Central Council was the national leadership group of the Revolutionary Trade Union Movement (Revoluční odborové hnutí or ROH), which had developed illegally as a resistance group within the official Nazi trade unions and quickly became the voice of organized labor after the war.⁵⁰ According to Nový, it was this

building commission that first “prepared the general plan for the nationalization of the building industry, the creation of socialist design organizations and for research.” During the Prague Uprising in early May 1945, the council’s building commission met with the architectural committee of the Communist Party—Václav Hlinský, František Jech, and Josef Kittrich—at Jiří Štursa’s atelier in Prague. There they agreed upon “a unified approach in liberated Czechoslovakia.”⁵¹ It was the beginning of what would become a broad coalition of left-wing architects.

Because of these wartime activities, the Union of Socialist Architects was able to regroup quickly; they held their first postwar meeting on May 12, 1945, three days after Prague was liberated.⁵² Although the group used the more general term “socialist,” the majority of its members already belonged to the Communist Party in 1945.⁵³ Members of the Central Council’s building commission and the Communist Party’s architectural commission were among the leaders of the reconstituted organization. They included President Jiří Kroha, who reclaimed the position he had held in the 1930s, Executive President Jan Vaněk, Vice President Janů, Secretary Štursová, Treasurer Stibor, and executive committee members Jech, Hlinský, Gillar, Kittrich, and Štursa.⁵⁴ Working from Moravia during the war, Jiří Voženílek had led a Zlín branch of the Central Council’s building commission.⁵⁵ With the formation of BAPS, he remained active at the national level and led the interest committee on research institutes.⁵⁶ Voženílek was unusual among his collaborators in the Architectural Working Group and the members of the Union of Socialist Architects because he waited until 1945 to join the Communist Party.⁵⁷

The Union of Socialist Architects’ first bulletin included “ideological directives,” which stated that the organization was founded on “the principles of dialectical materialism and their application toward the technical, creative, and sociological problems of architecture.” They vowed to carry forward their work from the 1930s and, in recognizably Marxist-Leninist phrasing, “to create the concrete preconditions for the elaboration of rational scientific working methods and the collectivization of architectural work.”⁵⁸ One of these “preconditions” was the consolidation and nationalization of the building industry; the Union of Socialist Architects organized BAPS to further this ideological objective.⁵⁹

The nature of dialectical materialism in the 1940s should be noted here. Although the phrase was not used by Marx or Engels, some writers, including Z.A. Jordan, have traced the underlying concept to Engels and the term itself to Lenin’s 1909 text, *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism*.⁶⁰ As Raymond Williams wrote, the term “in its earliest phases...has a comparative simplicity of definition, since it rests on a rejection of presumptive hypotheses of non-material or metaphysical prime causes, and defines its own categories in terms

of demonstrable physical investigations.”⁶¹ In his work on the northern Bohemian borderlands, Eagle Glassheim defines the materialist point of view in postwar Czechoslovakia as “a complex of attitudes that objectify and economize value . . . [this] includes the Marxist economic theory that underlies socialist thought, but it also encompasses the common understanding of materialism in which worldly possessions are privileged over noneconomic values.”⁶²

Stalin’s own presentation of “dialectical and historical materialism” became part of the “short course,” the standard text on Marxism-Leninism adapted from *History of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union*, which was translated into many languages and distributed worldwide.⁶³ Although it would not be printed in large numbers until after 1945, the first Czech translation of the short course appeared in 1939. Among the concepts elaborated in this and other classic Marxist-Leninist texts was the relationship between modes of material and social production. Human relations were represented in dialectical tension with materialist concerns. The “short course” argued that

the *instruments of production* wherewith material values [food, clothing, footwear, shelter, fuel, etc.] are produced, the *people* who operate the instruments of production and carry on the production of material values thanks to a certain *production experience* and *labour skill*—all these elements jointly constitute the *productive forces* of society. . . . Another aspect of production, another aspect of the mode of production, is the relation of men to each other in the process of production, men’s *relations of production*. Men carry on a struggle against nature and utilize nature for the production of material values not in isolation from each other, not as separate individuals, but in common, in groups, in societies. . . . Consequently, production, the mode of production, embraces both the productive forces of society and men’s relations of production, and is thus the embodiment of their unity in the process of production of material values.⁶⁴

These two fundamental concepts—determining the productive forces of material values and recognizing the need for collective struggle as part of this production—had direct implications for architecture.

The logic behind these two concepts was applied straightforwardly in the Union of Socialist Architects’ directives, which claimed that the integration of “the mental and aesthetic requirements of the broad strata of the people” with “the functional concept of building” created “a dialectical contradiction, which through its solution, brings about a new, higher concept of socialist architecture.”⁶⁵ Since dialectical materialism stressed the “concrete conditions of the material life of society” over the “abstract ‘principles of human reason,’” the physical nature of architecture was placed above its conceptual content.⁶⁶ This prioritization did not mean a lack of concern for aesthetics or comfort but rather an emphasis on finding solutions to problems in the material and physical world rather than in discourse or “reason.” The unbuilt and

unrealizable projects that were a staple among the avant-garde, what architect Stanislav Semrád referred to as “fantastical and paper planning,” were cited as an example of how architecture had veered in the wrong direction in the interwar period.⁶⁷ The social nature of this search was expressed in the desire for the collectivization of architectural practice and the interest in satisfying the needs of the people through design.

As the initiator of BAPS, the Union of Socialist Architects determined much about the organization’s self-presentation and intentions. According to Janů, BAPS was created, in part, to provide further representation for architects on the Central Council of Trade Unions’ new Commission for the Building Industry (Komise pro stavebnictví), the membership of which included not only architects but also building contractors, civil engineers, transportation specialists, industry representatives, and members of local political committees.⁶⁸ Since the Central Council was a trade union commission, seeking representation was a clear statement from the Union of Socialist Architects that they planned to promote architecture as a form of technical production rather than a craft. This was the fulfillment of Teige’s functionalist argument from the late 1920s and an important transition for the profession, with far-reaching implications in the years that followed.

The only nonarchitect to speak at the first meeting of BAPS, held in July 1945, was František Jungmann, from the Central Council’s presidium. Jungmann praised the new organization, noting that “architects were the first ones who took up this path of unity, the first of the mass elements of intellectual workers who entered into a partnership with the unified trade union movement.” He recalled the progressive reputation of architects in the interwar period and said that “the working people are expecting from architects in particular that they can help expand production to such an extent that every working man in the nation would be guaranteed, as soon as possible, a satisfactory share in all the necessities of life.”⁶⁹ Housing was integral to these expectations in his formulation:

It appears to us that the housing of the working people is not only unsatisfactory, but it is a direct blemish on the whole organization of the lives of working people. So far we do not give our laborers, our private employees, or our working intelligentsia well thought-out or organized apartments. We do not give them apartments that would offer sufficient living spaces for the families of working men, which would make our family lives more practical, rid them of the backward idiosyncrasy of the period of women’s domestic enslavement, give them air, sunshine and greenery, hygiene, and a real housing culture.⁷⁰

It was through housing, at the intersection of political necessity and material values, that architects found their first true base of power in the postwar period.

In creating BAPS, the Union of Socialist Architects was careful to create the appearance of a broad coalition. Just as the Communists had supported Beneš for president in the Košice Program, the Union of Socialist Architects supported a consensus candidate from outside their group to run BAPS—Oldřich Starý, president of the Architects' Club and editor of *Architektura ČSR* (fig. 1.4).⁷¹ The strategy worked, as all seven of the other existing professional architectural associations joined with the Union of Socialist Architects to form BAPS in July 1945.⁷² The members were mainly Czechs from Bohemia, although BAPS welcomed Slovaks and members of the Central Office of Moravian-Silesian Architects (Ústředí moravskoslezských architektů).⁷³

The architect, as envisioned in the BAPS platform presented at the July 1945 meeting, could offer expertise not only in building or infrastructure design but also in the formulation of a new society. As described by historian Martin Myant, BAPS's vision was similar to the agenda of the Communist Party itself at the time: "[The large size of the party in 1946] reflected the extremely broad role the Communist Party hoped to play: it was to be much more than just a vote-catching machine or the representative of a particular section of society. It intended, within its conception of national revolution, to lead in the building of a new social order. This meant that no field of social life was felt to be outside its sphere of competence."⁷⁴ The architect's particular ability to contribute to this "new social order" resided in the production of "material values," first and foremost factories and houses—each dependent on the other to utilize productive labor to its fullest. The fundamental emphasis in Marxism-Leninism on producing what were called the "means of life necessary for human existence," a category that included "shelter," explained the primary position of housing as a topic for investigation.⁷⁵ It also provides a context in which to understand the willingness of some architects who did not actively support the regime, such as Josef Havlíček and Karel Honzík, to continue working in housing design. An extension of this logic also placed hospitals, schools, and recreational facilities in the category of "means of life," and these building types were frequent subjects of study in the 1940s.

Architects achieved this special "society-building" status because of the duality of their own profession, on one hand technical and on the other formal. There was no other type of cultural production that could claim to contribute "material value" to society in the same way.⁷⁶ In his speech at the BAPS meeting, architect Stanislav Semrád addressed the way that the "architect's mission" was changing:

From now on, creativity in architecture will remain a synthesizing activity that fulfills the requirements of purpose, technology, economics, psychology, and aesthetics. Our work as architects is to expend all of our energy on building a joyful living environment for all working people. Of course it is necessary to state



FIG. 1.4. OLDŘICH STARÝ AND REPRESENTATIVES OF BAPS MEETING WITH PRESIDENT EDVARD BENEŠ IN 1946.

that today the elements of functionality, technology, and economy in architectural production rise to the fore to a great extent. Architecture is still invariably the only field of technical work in which industrial production has only been used minimally for the benefit of the public. One of our main objectives is to prepare the industrial foundation for architecture.⁷⁷

This emphasis on “technical work” placed architects in a politically powerful position as producers of indispensable objects, the “means of life.” The foundation of socialist design practice would be built on this presumption until the end of the Communist period.

Despite the choice of Starý to direct BAPS and the appearance of an inclusive structure for the organization, Communists in the Union of Socialist Architects were eager to capture some of the group’s political capital. By the fall of 1945, they already wanted to take a more aggressive position than the party leadership would allow. In October, the group sent a letter to the Central Offices of the Communist Party stating that “the Union of Socialist

Architects, comprised mainly of architects who are members of the Communist Party, established BAPS and, with the help of its factions, influences all of the associations that are part of BAPS. All current questions of a public or specialist nature, thus questions concerning BAPS and the economic state of architects, are handled by the Union of Socialist Architects through its faction created for this purpose and for the purpose of a good alliance between architects and the party.” The letter goes on to say that the Union of Socialist Architects was concerned about the presence of architects without party connections “in important specialist positions...like, for example, in planning departments.”⁷⁸ They wanted the party to take a more active role in seeking representation for members on all departmental and factory councils concerned with construction issues.

The Union of Socialist Architects also proposed creating a registration list for engineers and architects, organized according to professional expertise, which could be used to assess the possibility of having wider representation of professionals who were Communist Party members.⁷⁹ There is no evidence that such a list was ever put together. The letter is notable, however, because this proposal was similar to what would happen in 1948, when the unions and universities were purged by “action committees” set up to rid organizations of their untrustworthy members.⁸⁰ This move clearly shows the Union of Socialist Architects’ conspiratorial intention to use BAPS to further its own political agenda, and it validates the concerns voiced by some of the member associations in 1946 and 1947 about the disproportionate influence of the Union of Socialist Architects in BAPS and the “undemocratic” nature of the group’s objectives.⁸¹

ARCHITECTURE DURING THE TWO-YEAR PLAN

With its organizational structure in place and the Union of Socialist Architects’ program firmly embedded within its directives, BAPS went about coordinating and managing architectural practice and the relations among its constituent groups. Its frequent mimeographed bulletins to members indicated something of the group’s function within the community. Architects could find job listings, hear about events such as the visit to Prague of noted British architect F. R. S. Yorke in February 1946, or volunteer to serve on various committees such as the Committee for Culture and Economic Relations with the Soviet Union, which was looking for members of BAPS to join its architectural section.⁸² BAPS also created a thirty-two-member “housing commission” in January 1946 consisting of members from the various associations, including nineteen left-wing architects from the Union of Socialist Architects and the Architects’ Club.⁸³

The most important work that BAPS undertook in these early postwar

years was to organize the relationship between architects and the industries and government ministries that needed their services. Most of the country's industrial concerns were nationalized in October 1945. By the spring of 1947, 80 percent of the work force and more than two-thirds of the country's industrial capacity belonged to the state.⁸⁴ BAPS proposed taking control of architectural work at these national enterprises: "Today's practice...suffers from bad organization and mainly irresponsible distribution of the commissioned work[;] the few bits of work are accumulating in the hands of a few. In the meantime, the majority of architects are forced to stand idle. We seek to be able to rectify this. The distribution of work among architects can do this—if it is financed through public means and subject to public democratic control. BAPS, as the organization that unifies all architects, seeks the right to such control and its organization."⁸⁵ This was an early proposal for the rational distribution of work, a concept that would become a staple of the planned economy in the years to come. The flaw in this plan is obvious: not all architects are equally capable of or suited to particular types of projects.⁸⁶ This desire to make architects interchangeable was, however, one of the rationales for the standardization of building types that would occur after 1949.

The plan for structural control of the distribution of work did not extend to the formal and material qualities of architecture, an area in which BAPS did not intervene. As Rostislav Šváchá has shown, this freedom allowed multiple architectural styles and ways of thinking, such as late functionalism, monumentalism, surrealism, naturalism, and technocratism, to emerge and reemerge in this period.⁸⁷ Among the more notable early postwar projects was Václav Hlinský, Richard Podzemný, and Antonín Tenzer's village-style reconstruction of Lidice, which had seen its population sent to concentration camps and its buildings destroyed by the Nazis in the wake of the assassination of the German administrator of the Protectorate (fig. 1.5).⁸⁸ Other projects included the eclectic entries for the 1946 competition to replace the Town Hall on Old Town Square in Prague, which had been destroyed by fire during the Prague Uprising in May 1945; Václav Hlinský and Evžen Linhart's modernist collective house in Litvínov; and Ladislav Žák's book, *Obytné krajina* (The Inhabited Landscape), which considered the relationship between people and the natural environment (figs. 1.6–1.7).⁸⁹ The BAPS agenda accommodated all of these approaches, although, as previously noted, the technocratic agenda was already the strongest.

BAPS had a problem, however. There was virtually no new architectural work commissioned in 1945 or 1946, and the situation was only marginally better in 1947. Despite all of the planning and reorganization within the profession, architects were still beholden to the economic realities of the country and there was little demand for new buildings. Basic reconstruction was



FIG. 1.5. VÁCLAV HILSKÝ, DUPLEX IN RECONSTRUCTED TOWN, LIDICE, 1946.

FIG. 1.6. THE RUINS OF PRAGUE TOWN HALL AFTER THE FIRE, 1945.

FIG. 1.7. F. M. ČERNÝ, PROJECT FOR THE RECONSTRUCTION OF PRAGUE TOWN HALL, 1946.



FIG. 1.9. HSB COOPERATIVE, FREDHÄLL HOUSING DEVELOPMENT, STOCKHOLM, SWEDEN, FROM *ARCHITEKTURA ČSR* (1947).



FIG. 1.10. OPENING CELEBRATION FOR THE FUČÍK QUARTER IN 1947, FROM *ARCHITEKTURA ČSR* (1947).

twenty-four-unit, three-story masonry brick apartment buildings in Zlín, collectively called the Fučík Quarter and designed by the former Baťa architect Vladimír Karfík. The occasion of the buildings' opening was so momentous that BAPS sent architect F.M. Černý to address the assembled crowd on its behalf; the text of his short congratulatory speech and photographs of the building were then published in *Architektura ČSR* in the summer of 1947 (figs. 1.10 and 1.11).⁹²

Despite the lack of work, Janů and Voženílek found other opportunities to establish reputations for themselves among the powerful political elite. Janů accepted a position at the Settlement Office, which was managing resettlement in the borderlands, and he worked on housing policy there from 1946 until 1948, when he became head of the nationalized building industry. While at the office, he worked with top Communist Party officials to regulate the housing market in the borderlands and to supervise the renovation, construction, and assignment of new housing units. In 1946 and 1947, he also published two short books on strategies for repopulating the area: *Nájemné z bytů v pohraničí* (Rent from Apartments in the Borderlands) and *Stavíme byty* (We Are Building Apartments). In these two texts, he offered strategies for setting rental prices and determining values for existing buildings, ideas for state-funded rebuilding and construction, and guidelines for the design of new apartments, including a limit of 70 square meters (753 square feet) for a fully equipped two-bedroom unit. Also in 1946, Janů published *Socialistické budování (oč půjde ve stavebnictví a architektuře)* (Socialist Building [What's



FIG. 1.11. VLADIMÍR KARFÍK, FUČÍK QUARTER, ZLÍN, 1946–1947.

at Stake in Construction and Architecture]), an influential book in which he expanded upon Teige-influenced arguments from the 1930s for the nationalization and industrialization of architecture along scientific and technocratic lines.⁹³ It was in *Socialistické budování* that he first proposed the “living core,” a combination kitchen, WC, and bathroom that could be prefabricated and dropped into place with a crane (fig. 1.12). Janů’s role at the Settlement Office and the political credibility that it brought him proved crucial to his future success.

Voženílek, on the other hand, continued working at Baťa and joined the Communist Party in 1945. After Vladimír Karfík, the most prominent of the Baťa architects, left Zlín for Bratislava in 1946, Voženílek was promoted to the top position in the office.⁹⁴ He became, therefore, the first director of a state-controlled architectural atelier, since Baťa had already been nationalized. It was experience that would be important for Voženílek in 1948. In these years, he was also the regional leader for BAPS and active in local politics. He increasingly made a name for himself among the political leadership in Prague with projects such as the regional plan for the Zlín–Otrokovice corridor (fig. 1.13). Based on Miliutin’s linear city model, this plan was similar to the Architectural Working Group’s 1930 design for Čakovice and Letňany. He designed a factory building to replace one bombed in the war and a project for a collective house.⁹⁵ The regional plan was noticed at the highest levels of the Communist Party; an undated photograph shows him personally explaining the project to party head Klement Gottwald (fig. 1.14).

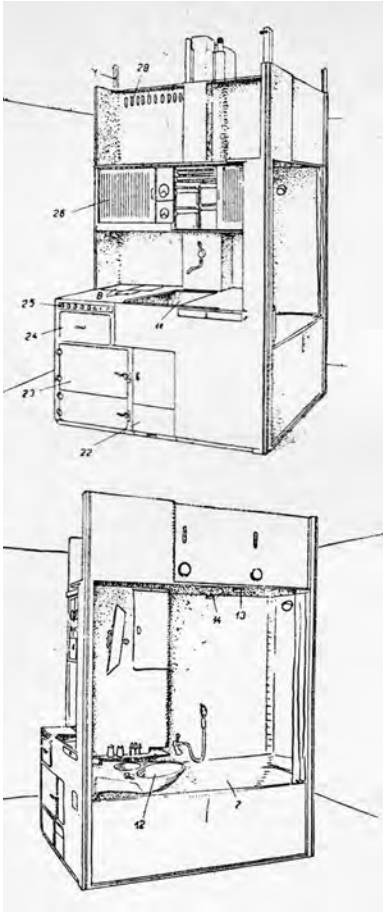


FIG. 1.12. KAREL JANŮ, "LIVING CORE,"
FROM *SOCIALISTICKÉ BUDOVÁNÍ (OČ PŮJDE
VE STAVEBNICTVÍ A ARCHITEKTUŘE)* (1946).

As funding for new projects became available during the Two-Year Plan, architects were faced with the question of what postwar modernism might look like. Unlike Germany or the Soviet Union, where authoritarian politics had ended vibrant avant-garde movements, Czechoslovakia had continued to support modern styles through the end of the war.⁹⁶ Modernism as an architectural style was not only a formal issue for many architects but also a social sensibility that positioned architecture as a medium for the improvement of everyday life. Even during the years of the Protectorate, from 1939 to 1945, professional groups held exhibitions celebrating the interwar avant-garde.⁹⁷ *Architektura ČSR*, published from 1939 through 1942, filled its pages with extensive coverage of recent and contemporary modern buildings as well as exhibitions and events, with only rare indications of the difficulties of the occupation and war.

By 1946, the question of architectural form was not as clear. There was a growing sense that the universal qualities of interwar avant-garde modernism that had once been attractive to left-wing architects might not be suited to the postwar desire for a more rooted architectural identity brought about by the massive destruction and displacement of the war. Architecture in Germany, France, Switzerland, and Austria had been a popular source of inspiration for Czech and Slovak architects before the war. It was Scandinavia and Great Britain that dominated the pages of *Architektura ČSR* in 1946 and 1947. Jaromír Krejcar wrote articles on England, where he had gone to install an exhibition on Czechoslovak modernism and to attend an international architecture conference; he immigrated to London in 1948.⁹⁸ Interest in Scandinavia increased during the war, when Swedish, Finnish, and Danish architecture magazines had been "the only foreign specialist literature available" in Czechoslovakia.⁹⁹ The appeal of Scandinavian architecture led to greater communication between the regions, and, in the summer of 1946, an official delegation of Czech and Slovak architects visited Stockholm, Helsinki, and Copenhagen, a

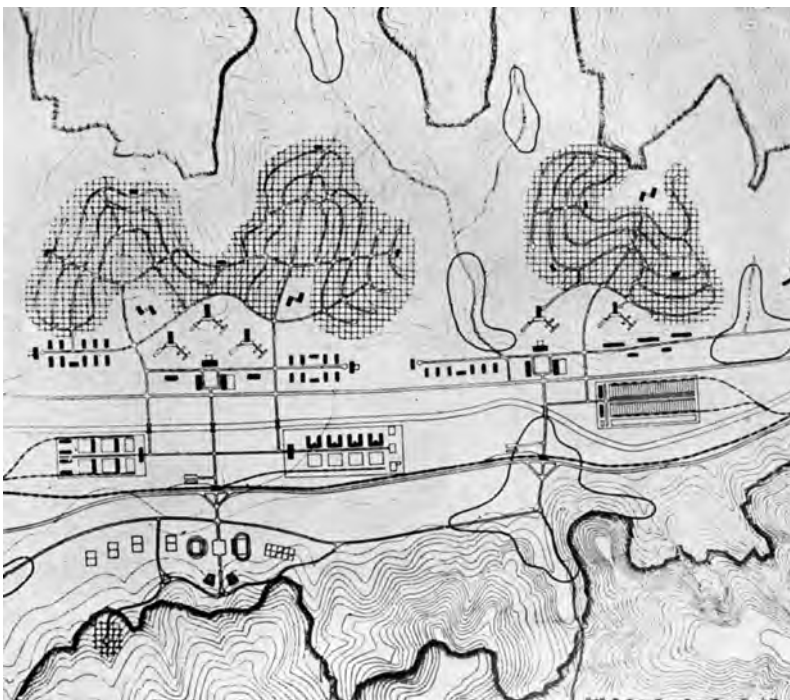


FIG. 1.13. VLADIMÍR KUBEČKA AND JIŘÍ VOŽENÍLEK, THREE UNITS OF THE REGIONAL PLAN FOR ZLÍN-OTROKOVÍCE, 1946.

FIG. 1.14. JIŘÍ VOŽENÍLEK EXPLAINING THE ZLÍN-OTROKOVÍCE PROJECT TO COMMUNIST PARTY HEAD KLEMENT GOTTWALD, UNDATED.

journey that received extensive coverage in the Czechoslovak press and influenced housing design for several years.¹⁰⁰

While most architects still favored the dynamic cubic volumes and unadorned surfaces of interwar modernism, a British- and Scandinavian-inspired palette developed that was softer and more varied, with brick, tile, wood, and stone. In Czechoslovakia, the new popularity of these materials was due in part to shortages of reinforced concrete and steel, but it also reflected an effort to reconnect architecture to its surroundings through color, texture, and scale. In response to the natural settings of many of the Scandinavian projects, architects also became more interested in responding to the landscape. Instead of conceiving of their projects on flattened, empty sites, as had been typical in the 1930s, they started to work more thoughtfully with the existing conditions. Ladislav Žák's *Obytná krajina* (The Inhabited Landscape) was timely in this regard, appearing in 1947 and helping to emphasize issues of landscape and the natural environment.

Yet this vision of postwar architecture still relied on a model of individual commissions completed by a single architect. With the growing influence of the Communist Party and a general move to the left within the profession, a critique emerged of the interwar avant-garde, one inspired by the arguments against “bourgeois” constructivism in the Soviet Union in the 1930s. The criticism focused on the perceived weak political stance of some self-proclaimed leftists in the interwar years, many of whom spoke about their social consciousness while designing luxurious single-family houses, restaurants, and retail stores.¹⁰¹ For some, including the architects in the Union of Socialist Architects, the political situation after 1945 finally made it possible to conceive of a new type of socialist architecture that was less concerned with unique forms, however contextualized or well intentioned, and more attentive to the social and economic implications of design. This new architecture placed emphasis on program and function over aesthetics, particularly with respect to higher-density housing types. However, tension between individual commissions and mass production would remain a feature of the architectural culture of Czechoslovakia throughout the communist period.

THE COLLECTIVE HOUSE IN LITVÍN OV

It was not clear in the first years after the war which point of view—individual or collective—would be most influential. In some instances, such as the architecture of Zlín during the Two-Year Plan, these positions were not mutually exclusive, although Zlín's specific history made it exceptional. The first nationwide test of postwar socialist principles could be found in two high-profile competitions held in 1946—for the new Town Hall in Prague and for a collective house in the hills near the critical borderlands city of Most,



FIG. 1.15. VACLÁV HILSKÝ AND EVŽEN LINHART, MODEL OF THE COLLECTIVE HOUSE, LITVÍN OV, 1947.

less than fifteen miles from the German border in northern Bohemia. Most of the Town Hall designs were awkward mixes of geometric volumes and monumental façades, indicating something of the confusion within the profession about where architecture was heading. Although that competition did not yield a winning entry or a built solution, the collective house competition succeeded (the building would not be completed until 1958, however).¹⁰² The winning project, by Václav Hlinský and Evžen Linhart, was formally evocative of the functionalist architecture of the early 1930s while showing sensitivity to the local climate and terrain (fig. 1.15). The building provided an image of postwar socialist architecture that was widely hailed as an example of how modern forms could be used to achieve a socialist agenda, although its avant-garde style would eventually undermine the project, with critics complaining that such a “luxurious” project was not “socialist” enough in its intentions.¹⁰³

The Stalin Works (Stalinový závod) in the village of Zaluží sponsored the collective house competition with assistance from BAPS, which “readily offer[ed] suggestions and cooperation to attain the correct ideological scope of the housing actions and elaborate on the program and the working

approach.”¹⁰⁴ Zaluží, which has since been overtaken by the factory, was situated in the Bílina valley in the brown-coal basin of the northwest Bohemian borderlands. It was the site of the German synthetic fuel plant, Maltheuren (Sudetenländische Treibstoffwerke AG Maltheuren), built during the war. By 1943, the plant had almost thirty thousand workers, including Ostarbeiters, who were conscripted by the Nazis in their eastern territories (mainly Russia and Poland), and prisoners of war.¹⁰⁵ Seventy percent of the factory was destroyed by the Allies in 1944, and the remaining operations came under Soviet control in May 1945. The complex was then handed over to the Czechoslovak government in early 1946, when it was renamed the Stalin Works.¹⁰⁶

The housing crisis was particularly acute in this area of the borderlands, with its hilly terrain and sparsely populated towns. Before the end of the war, the German enterprise had built a small settlement called Osada (The Colony) with 318 *heimatstil* row houses near Horní Litvínov at the base of the Ore Mountains (Krušné hory) above the Bílina basin.¹⁰⁷ The Nazis also prepared road, sewer, and utilities infrastructure for the continuation of the settlement to the east along the base of the mountains.¹⁰⁸ The initial postwar plans for the site called for a massive housing development for 180,000 people in 35 collective houses with 400 apartment units in each. Employees from the Stalin Works and neighboring enterprises were to be housed in the new settlement.¹⁰⁹

As noted in the *Architektura ČSR*’s introduction to the competition entries, the collective house type had its origins in the Soviet Union in the work of the architects Nicolai Miliutin and Moisei Ginzburg.¹¹⁰ The Russians abandoned the type in the 1930s, but it remained popular among the left-wing avant-garde in Europe into the 1940s.¹¹¹ In a collective house, individuals, or in some cases families, lived in modest units without full kitchens. Essential services, including dining and child day care, were provided communally in the building’s common areas, and there were also shared amenities, so residents could fulfill their everyday needs within the building itself. The choice of the collective house type for the Stalin Works project shows the influence of BAPS and its housing commission, formed in 1946. Members of the commission included a large faction from the most left-wing groups in BAPS, the Union of Socialist Architects and the Architects’ Club, many of whose members had proposed similar “minimum dwelling” or collective house projects in the early 1930s.¹¹²

The proposal for the large development was based on the assumption that the Stalin Works would be rebuilt to its full wartime capacity, but the Ministry of Industry decided to rehabilitate only 33 percent of the plant, and before any architectural proposals were solicited, the housing proposal was scaled back.¹¹³ A 1947 report by the Local National Committee in Most described the situation:

[When] the Stalin Works was constructed...the question of housing was put entirely to the side and at that time the administration provided accommodation to only a small percentage of the employees at the plant....The main cadre of workers was prisoners of war and interned persons, living in the most primitive way in workers' barracks....[It is now] the highest priority to provide the workers of the Stalin Works suitable and healthy housing so that this provisional situation—the housing of a majority of workers in camps or at remote sites, meaning a constant burden on the enterprise to import workers and lost working hours—can be changed to a more permanent situation.¹¹⁴

The Stalin Works, under the leadership of General Director Miloš Svitavský, a trained architect and economist, “invite[d] prominent Czech architects to participate in a competition for the design of...the incomplete building site, including the completion of Osada and proposals for residential and public buildings.”¹¹⁵ Unlike the initial plan for thirty-five collective houses, the competition asked for only one collective house that could accommodate eight hundred workers in studio, two-room, and three-room apartments with public amenities and more family houses in Osada, the plans of which were a separate part of the competition.

In an unexpected decision, given the conditions of the building industry at the time, the competition brief proposed two thirteen-story towers as the primary residential structures; architects could choose how to accommodate the single-family homes and the public buildings. According to the Ministry of Technology, which oversaw the nationalized building industry during the Two-Year Plan, the tower configuration was chosen for three primary reasons. First, due to the terrain, there was little buildable space to the east of the existing town, where land had already been acquired and infrastructure prepared. Therefore, taller buildings with smaller footprints made sense. Second, despite the objections of the Stalin Works representatives who thought that such a concentration of people might make emergency evacuations unsafe in the event of an industrial accident, the ministry argued that a dense settlement meant that it would be cheaper to outfit the buildings with “simple fire alarms.”¹¹⁶

The third and most architecturally sophisticated justification for the two towers related to the surrounding landscape and the climate. The local authorities determined that a 15-kilometer-long zone at the top of the Bílina basin was often “obscured by dense fog, rising in part as a waste product of the industrial activities, and in part because of the peculiar specificities of the microclimate. The boundary of this fog and smoke probably reaches to the height of 320 meters [1,050 feet] above sea level.”¹¹⁷ In order to escape this bad air, a minimum height of 350 meters [1,150 feet] above sea level was set for the new development.¹¹⁸ At this elevation, there was concern that a “monoblock,” or a

series of long, low apartment buildings as first proposed, would trap the bad air in the valley below; two separate towers would allow more air movement through the site. Visually, the two tall towers were also preferred, because they were “absolutely scaled to the proportion of this space” and the broad vertical façades of the buildings would be well illuminated against the Ore Mountains behind them.¹¹⁹

The site’s topography and geology did pose some significant challenges to the tower concept. The surrounding areas were densely forested and the ground was rocky, so there was concern that the building foundations might be unstable.¹²⁰ A steel skeleton with deep footings was determined to be the best structural option, although this was a rare recommendation at the time because material shortages made steel extremely expensive. As the project moved forward, the reliance on steel would become a major obstacle to its completion. One of the towers would eventually be built with a reinforced concrete skeleton.¹²¹

Nineteen individual or group projects were submitted to the competition in 1946. BAPS had invited five of the groups, and the architects of the remaining fourteen projects had answered an open call.¹²² Participants included Jiří Štursa, Josef Kittrich and Emanuela Kittrichová, Bohumír Holý and Jaromír Krejcar, a team led by Josef Havlíček, and another from the Baťa design office in Zlín, led by Jiří Voženílek. The projects largely followed the competition requirements, although several of them, including the project by Holý and Krejcar, proposed either one or two monoblocks that were parallel to the slope of the hill, creating the microclimate blocking condition that planners wanted to avoid (fig. 1.16). This arrangement would have given the units a panoramic view of the valley to the southwest, something the two-tower configuration would not have provided. Other projects located the Collective House in the center of Osada, rather than on the undeveloped site to the east of town where infrastructure was already in place.¹²³

The winning entry for the Collective House competition was submitted by an unlikely pair: Václav Hlinský and Evžen Linhart. Linhart was ten years older than Hlinský, and he died in 1949, before the first phase of the project was completed. An early member of Devětsil, Linhart was in the early 1920s one of the “Purist Four,” a group of students at the Technical University in Prague who famously broke from their professors to propose compositions of simple cubic and cylindrical volumes at the start of the shift toward modern abstraction.¹²⁴ In the late 1920s and 1930s, Linhart was a proponent of emotional functionalism. His work had long been inspired by Le Corbusier, who had designed his Unité d’Habitation in 1945, and the Collective House had some formal and spatial similarities to that project.

Hlinský, on the other hand, designed a number of social housing projects



FIG. 1.16. BOHUMÍR HOLÝ AND JAROMÍR KREJCAR, PROJECT FOR THE COLLECTIVE HOUSE, LITVÍNNOV, 1946.

and minimum dwelling proposals in Prague with a rotating group of young collaborators in the 1930s. Politically aligned with the Union of Socialist Architects and the Left Front, Hilský had a design sensibility that was closer to emotional functionalism than to the scientific point of view espoused by Teige and the Architectural Working Group. By the mid-1930s, together with Rudolf Jasenský, Karel Koželka, and František Jech, he was arguing for an “aesthetic” building program that brought “civilization and culture” to inexpensive housing units.¹²⁵ Always politically active, he was a member of the Central Council of Trade Unions’ building commission and the Communist Party’s architectural commission during the war. Along with Richard Podzemný and Antonín Tenzer, he won the competition for the rebuilding of Lidice in 1945. As a head designer at Stavoprojekt in Prague after 1948, he was a prolific architect into the normalization period of the 1970s.¹²⁶ In an essay about Hilský’s career, Švácha characterizes both Hilský and Linhart as architects who were “avowed admirers of Le Corbusier” despite their age difference. Based on interviews with Hilský, he also describes a collaborative working method that involved passing freehand sketches back and forth until a final design emerged.¹²⁷ One of the early sketches for the project shows the towers, on Corbusian pilotis, straddling the road, although in the final design the entire complex is on the south side of the street (fig. 1.17). Hilský and Linhart, who had not worked together before, may have been introduced when Linhart worked at the Ministry of Information and Culture, led by his childhood friend Václav Kopecký. Hilský and Kopecký were political allies in the upper levels of the Communist Party apparatus.¹²⁸

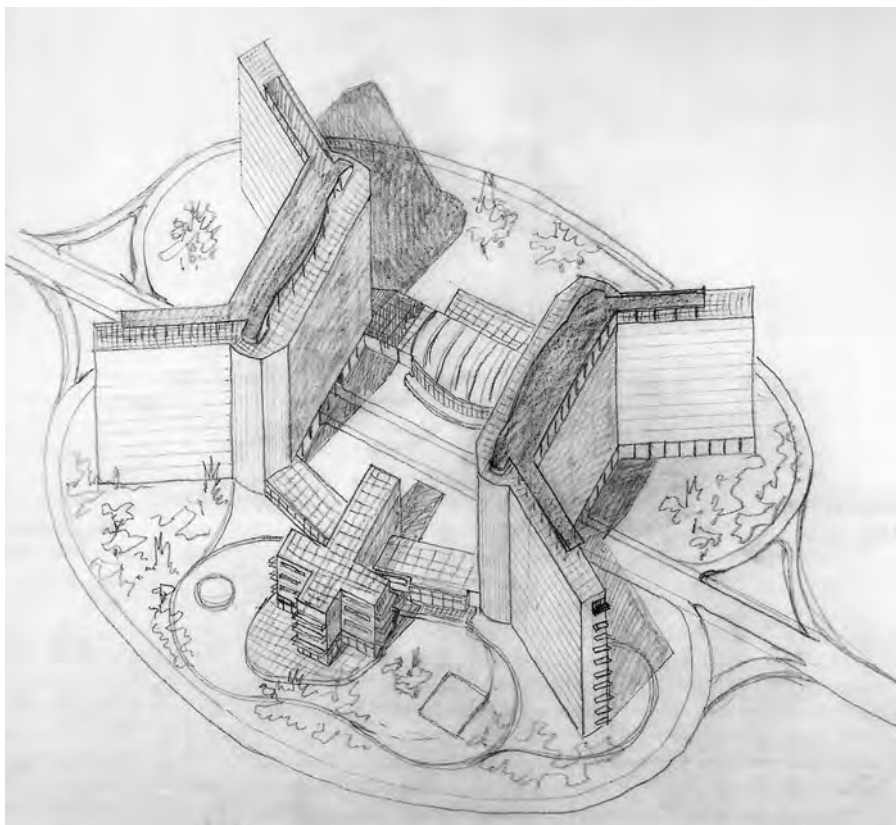


FIG. 1.17. COLLECTIVE HOUSE, LITVÍNNOV, INITIAL SKETCH, 1946.

FIG. 1.8. LITVÍNNOV, VIEW TOWARD THE ORE MOUNTAINS, AFTER 1958.

Hilský and Linhart's design featured two symmetrical thirteen-story residential towers with a seven-story central connector, located on the site east of town (fig. 1.18). In the design submitted to the competition, each tower was the mirror image of the other and had two wings, one set at a 30-degree angle to the other to create a strong diagonal composition. As stipulated in the competition brief, there were 292 units proposed for the two towers—100 three-room apartments, 160 two-room units, and 32 studio apartments (figs. 1.19 and 1.20).¹²⁹ In the basement of the residential wings, there were individual garages.¹³⁰ Between the towers, the winning design had a perpendicular seven-story connector building with a dormitory and spaces for the building's public amenities, as well as a separate two-story school building along the central axis that did not make it into the built project. The two men also submitted a design for the completion of Osada, but it was not chosen. A team led by Josef Havlíček won this part of the competition with their proposal for 22 six-unit row houses on a site between the Collective House and the existing town; the development was later named Litvínov-Stalinovky (The Little Houses of the Stalin Works). By 1959, the combined area had more than eight thousand residents.¹³¹

The towers of the Collective House each had thirteen stories, including a basement and sub-basement, which, because of the steeply sloping site, were above ground on the south side of the building (fig. 1.21). The 160-bed dormitory, which is now a hotel, was in the top three floors of the center building; the middle two floors were occupied by the dining room, social club, ceremonial hall, library, study areas, convenience store, repair shop, barbershop, and storage room (fig. 1.22). The two lower floors contained the service kitchen, laundry facilities, an exercise room, a small casino room, a health clinic, and the boiler room, which supplied central heating to all the apartments.¹³² In the final project, the school and nursery were also in the basement and sub-basement, although they were fully above ground in the courtyard and included a patio and balcony where children could play. There were also atelier spaces provided on the top floor of the front wings and a covered roof terrace.¹³³

Hilský and Linhart took a deliberate approach to the distribution of the units—the three-room apartments are in the two angled front wings of the towers and those with one or two rooms are in the parallel back wings. The three-room apartments are all two stories with internal staircases; they are accessed through windowed hallways along the north side of the building on every other floor (fig. 1.23). As seen in a 1958 photograph, the units have a small kitchen and WC near the first-floor entrance and the remainder of the floor is a single large living area with the stair along the edge of the living room (fig. 1.24). There is also a small balcony and winter garden looking southwest

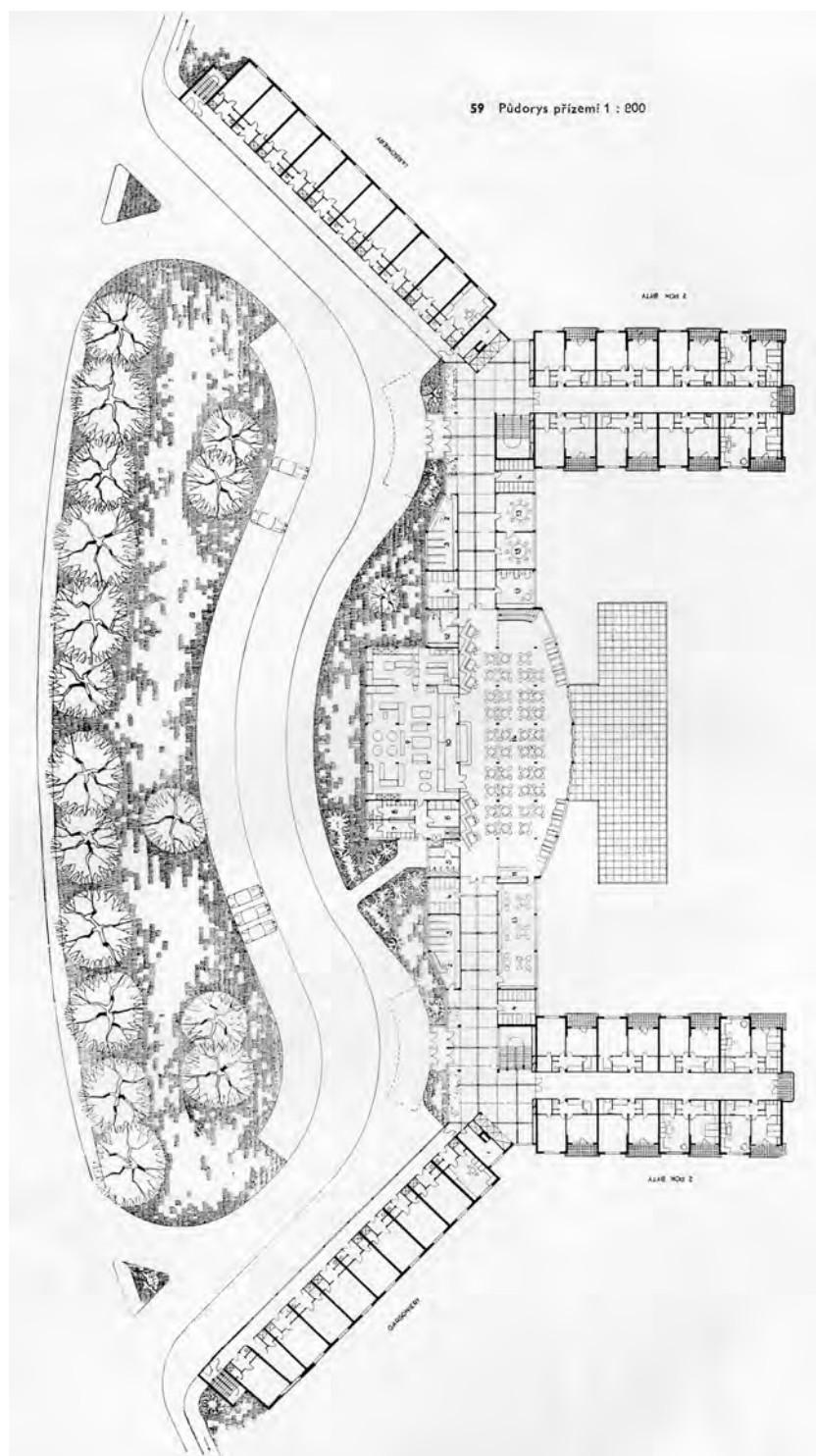


FIG. 1.19. COLLECTIVE HOUSE, LITVÍNNOV, GROUND-FLOOR PLAN, 1946–1958.

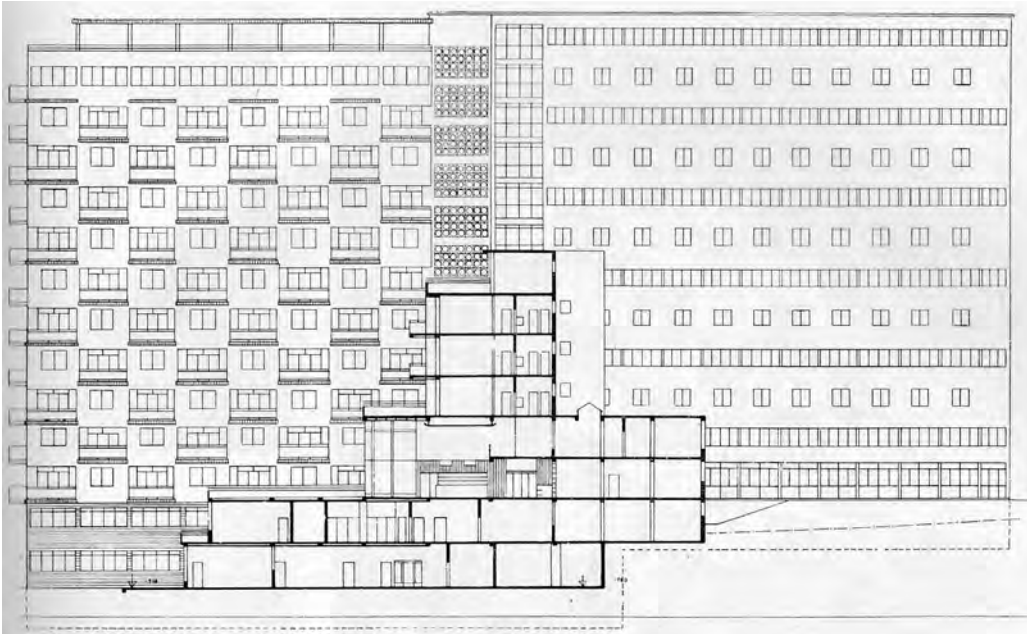


FIG. 1.20. COLLECTIVE HOUSE, LITVÍNNOV, SECTION LOOKING WEST, 1946–1958.

FIG. 1.21. COLLECTIVE HOUSE, LITVÍNNOV, COURTYARD AND BACK WING OF EAST TOWER.



FIG. 1.22. COLLECTIVE HOUSE, LITVÍNŮV, RESTAURANT.

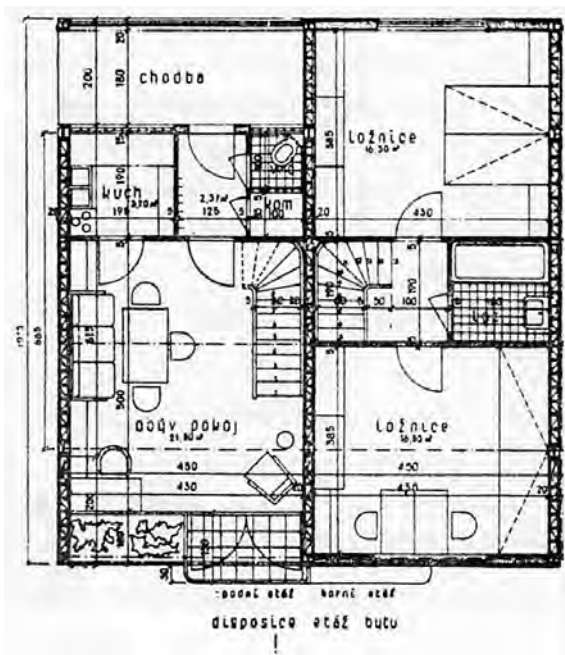


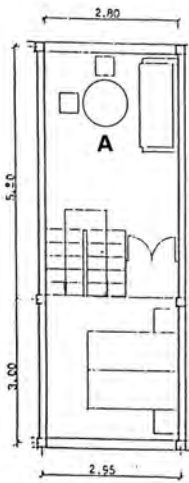
FIG. 1.23. COLLECTIVE HOUSE, LITVÍNŮV, THREE-ROOM, TWO-STORY UNIT PLAN.

or southeast toward the valley. The stair leads to two equal-sized bedrooms and a bathing room upstairs. The three-room units can be best described as stacked row houses.

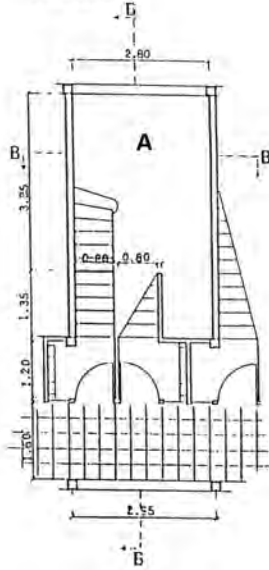
To architectural historians, the two-story apartment section is best known from Le Corbusier's 1945 design for the *Unité d'Habitation* in Marseilles, France.¹³⁴ However, both designs relied on the earlier work of Russian architect Moisei Ginzburg, including his Narkomfin Collective House in Moscow from 1929, referenced in relation to this project in *Architektura ČSR* (fig. 1.25).¹³⁵ There are two significant differences, however, between the Litvínov units and those in Marseilles or Moscow. First, there are no double-height living spaces in these units, so despite the two-story section, the rooms themselves are traditional in scale. Second, the units do not interlock; each one is entered on the first floor. In addition, the floor plans are mirrored in neighboring units; in this sense, they are closer to the Moscow example. In Marseilles, the apartments have two layouts—one in which the entrance leads into the kitchen and the living room beyond, with the bedrooms and bathroom upstairs, and



Верхняя ячейка.



Этаж коридора.



Нижняя ячейка.

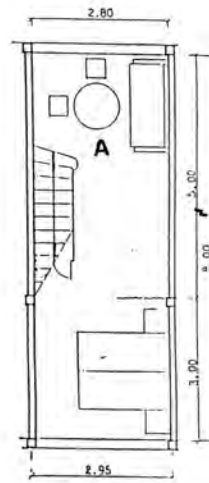


FIG. 1.24. COLLECTIVE HOUSE, LITVÍNŮV, LIVING ROOM IN THE THREE-ROOM, TWO-STORY UNIT.

FIG. 1.25. MOISEI GINZBURG, NARKOMFIN F-UNIT PLANS IN MOSCOW, 1928-1930.

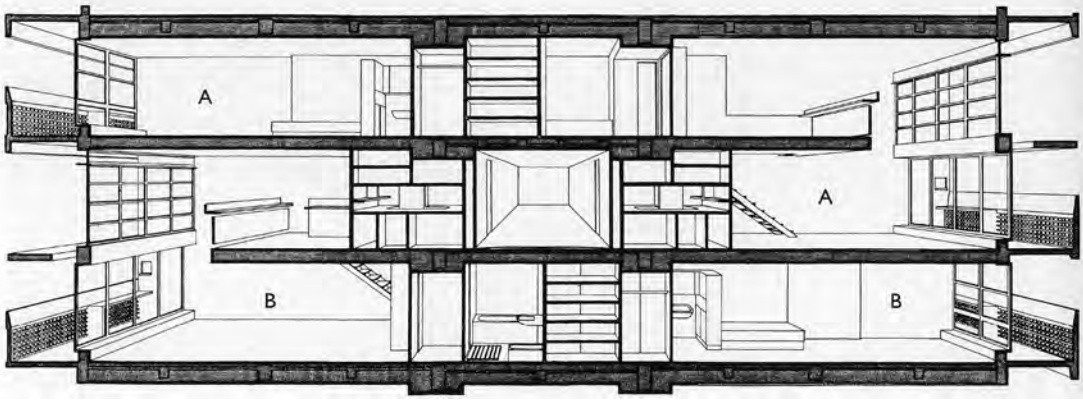


FIG. 1.26. LE CORBUSIER, PERSPECTIVAL SECTION OF THE UNITS AT UNITÉ D'HABITATION IN MARSEILLES, FRANCE, 1945–1952.

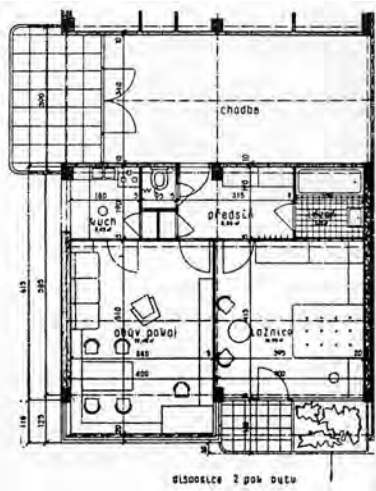


FIG. 1.27. COLLECTIVE HOUSE, LITVÍNOV, TWO-ROOM UNIT PLAN.

the second, in which the entrance leads into the kitchen on a second-story mezzanine and the living spaces, including the bedrooms and bathroom, are downstairs (what Kenneth Frampton calls “up-going” and “down-going” units, respectively) (fig. 1.26).¹³⁶ A windowless central hallway on every other floor served both units in the Marseilles complex.

The one- and two-room apartments designed for the parallel back wings in Litvínov are much more like the “minimum dwellings” of the early 1930s—single-floor units, one structural bay deep, entered from a double-loaded central corridor, so that the units face either east-southeast or west-southwest (fig. 1.27). As first proposed, there would have been a mixture of studio and two-room apartments on each floor. In the final project, however, all of the studio apartments are located on the basement level or the first floor of the residential wings in the spaces originally designated for the garages, which were moved for safety reasons.¹³⁷ Floors three through eleven contain all of the two-room apartments, each with its own balcony off the bedroom. They have kitchens, WC, bathrooms, and storage spaces to the left and right of the front entrance, which leaves the rest of the space open. Unlike the façades of the angled



FIG. 1.28. REAR FAÇADE OF THE WEST TOWER, SHOWING BALCONIES ON THE TWO-ROOM AND THREE-ROOM APARTMENTS AFTER RESTORATION, 2003.

wings, which emphasize their horizontality with continuous lines of windows and balconies, the back wings are volumetrically more interesting, with cubic proportions and an interplay between solid and void created by an alternating checkerboard pattern of windows and balconies (fig. 1.28). At the elbow joint of the two wings on the courtyard side are elevator cores and stairs separated by large communal landings and enclosed in glass block on both sides.

In his comments on the Litvínov Collective House in *Architektura ČSR*, Stanislav Semrád argued that the program for this project was unique in the world because it did not propose that all residents live in “more or less one single residential cell” but recognized instead that different family configurations required different apartments.¹³⁸ It also allowed women to maintain their family role without having to suffer the traditional drudgery of domestic work. Karel Honzík and Josef Kittrich later suggested renaming the building “The House for Communal Living” to reflect this distinction.¹³⁹ Unlike some of the earlier collective house projects from the 1920s and 1930s, the one

in Litvínov also started with the presumption that the family unit should be supported rather than broken apart, as proposed (but not executed) in Ginzburg's Narkomfin or in the earlier designs of Karel Teige and his followers. This emphasis on the socialist family would become a defining characteristic of the post-1948 housing programs.¹⁴⁰ Unlike in the Soviet Union, where communal apartments forced several families to occupy a single unit with one kitchen and bathroom, Czechs and Slovaks would always be provided with private, although usually small, apartments.

Throughout the approval process within the Ministries of Technology, Finance, Agriculture, and Labor and Social Affairs, all of which had to sign off on the project since it was sponsored by a national enterprise, the "sociological aspect" of the design was questioned. Ministry officials raised concerns about issues such as the safety and comfort of pregnant women in two-story units, where the stairs might be uneven and unsafe; the choice to place the school in between the tall towers, which would leave the children in the shade for much of the day; and the location of the restaurant terrace on the third floor of the central building, just below the dormitory windows and within earshot of the rest of the apartments in the summer months, when people wanted "quiet."¹⁴¹ In his critical comments about the competition entries, architect Miroslav Tryzna voiced his concern that the projects were, in fact, too extravagant for the time. He objected to housing families above the third floor and opposed the plan to allot space for winter gardens and garages when so many people lacked basic housing. He was especially concerned about the emphasis on more single-family row houses in Osada when he believed collective living should be supported in all cases. He suggested that a project such as the one at Litvínov could "discredit as unrealizable" the entire housing program, since clearly the tower scheme and row houses were not the most economical solution to the housing shortage.¹⁴²

The government was also concerned that the project and its many exceptional features would set a bad example, thereby reducing the possibility that the plan numbers could be met. Before construction began the Building Department (III/B) of the Ministry of Technology was asked to provide ministry leadership with a detailed report analyzing the circumstances of the competition and any concerns that should be raised about the winning entry.¹⁴³ The most objectionable aspect of the project was its cost. Hilský and Linhart's project exceeded the budget limits set for the Two-Year Plan by 150 percent. The units, together with their fraction of the collective spaces, would each cost around 450,000 Czechoslovak crowns. The Ministry of Finance had budgeted only 180,000 Czechoslovak crowns per unit, although it was understood that this would be a difficult target to reach.¹⁴⁴

The Building Department faced an ideological problem. Its report argued

that the project was “an ‘unsocialist’ enterprise in the first degree” because “our system of socialized democracy accepted as its economic credo the utilitarian principle of the greatest success for the greatest number of people. . . . [T]he construction of this building does not mean a contribution to the fulfillment of the good of the greatest number of people, but to a very small number of people to the detriment of all the others.” The report went on to say that the use of “quota-controlled materials” for such “luxuriously appointed” apartments was “diametrically in opposition to such directives.”¹⁴⁵ Yet the Building Department was unwilling to stop the project due to the “political background of the whole affair” and determined that the decision was best left to the assessment of the appropriate regional national committee.¹⁴⁶ In May 1947, the Building Department informed the Ministry of Finance that some concessions had been agreed upon between Stalin Works officials and the Ministry of Technology, including making all the apartments single story, establishing a ratio of studios to family apartments of 4:1, and removing all of the garages from the main building. However, with the exception of the garage location, these changes did not appear in the final project.¹⁴⁷ One can speculate that the Communist takeover of 1948 changed the group of people upon whose opinion the project depended and so the concessions were no longer necessary.

In 1959, Hilský wrote an article to celebrate the completion of the second wing of the Collective House, twelve years after it was first proposed. In the text, he recounted the complexities of bringing the project to completion, including being forced to reengineer the second wing in reinforced concrete when using steel “became unrealistic” in 1950. First and foremost, he credited General Director Svitavský for his “support and courage” in not allowing the project to fail. He also thanked the Union of Czechoslovak Youth (*Československý svaz mládeže*) for fighting from the beginning against “reactionary circles” who wanted to defeat the project.¹⁴⁸ The intervening twelve years had been tumultuous because of the political changes of 1948, the imposition of socialist realist methods in the state architecture offices in 1950, the show trials in the early 1950s, and the start of the Khrushchev-era “thaw” in 1955. Despite all this, Hilský praised the “joyous results of [their] collective efforts” and lamented the fact that Linhart was not alive to share in the success. Although Jiří Voženílek would design another collective house in Zlín in 1947, within the consciousness of Czech and Slovak architects, the Litvínov project remained the singular expression of a true interwar modern spirit in the immediate postwar period. For some, the building was a reminder of how an interwar vision of socialist modernity had failed to transcend the political changes of 1948; for others, it was the best example of the excesses of high modernism and a reminder of why postwar architecture had taken a different path.

THE MODEL HOUSING DEVELOPMENTS

At the same time that the collective house competition was being held, the state was formulating another approach to housing design, one grounded in a belief that architecture was fundamentally a social and economic endeavor and not a creative act. Potential investors in state housing projects, namely ministries, national committees, and nationalized enterprises, had vowed to provide as much new housing to their constituencies as possible, and simple, inexpensive units were essential to achieving that goal. Given the scale of the housing problem, the shortage of building materials, and the lack of available skilled labor, new strategies had to be found. Not surprisingly, this situation led officials back to the Architectural Working Group's agenda from the 1930s and their call for more standardization and "typification"—the use of a limited number of building designs according to programmatic types. This approach was in clear contrast to the model of the Collective House in Litvínov, which was designed to meet site-specific conditions and conceived as a unique project. Although the profession would not embrace typification at a national scale until after 1948, the experimental Model Housing Development (Vzorné sídliště) program, proposed in July 1946, indicated something of what was to come for Czech and Slovak architects.

The government's formal involvement in planning for new housing construction started as early as October 1945, when the Ministry of Transportation's Public Technical Committee (Ministerstvo dopravy-veřejná správa technická) sent out a letter soliciting information from other ministries on the status of their employees' housing.¹⁴⁹ As part of its reconstruction efforts, the Ministry of Transportation assessed the conditions of roads, bridges, and settlement infrastructure, which soon included housing. In January 1946, the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs set up an interministerial committee for housing. In addition to members of "political parties and professional organizations and institutions," Labor and Social Affairs also asked representatives from the Ministries of Finance, Justice, the Interior, and the Ministry of Transportation's Public Technical Committee to join the meetings on the housing situation.¹⁵⁰ This interministerial group set up five committees—housing, land, technical, organizational, and financial—to address various aspects of the housing crisis.¹⁵¹ The technical committee, which was working to set standards for apartment units and building practices, soon split into two subcommittees, one for "building construction and materials," which was led by Karel Pilát, who would later administer the Model Housing Development program, and the other for "sociological and statistical research," which was led by Jiří Štursa, who brought the Architectural Working Group's agenda of scientific functionalism directly into the discussions.¹⁵²

The institutional framework for this program changed in early July 1946,

when the ministries were reshuffled. The Public Technical Committee was removed from the Ministry of Transportation to become a separate entity, the Ministry of Technology (Ministerstvo techniky).¹⁵³ When the government issued a decree on July 16 declaring that 125,000 new apartment units would be built during the Two-Year Plan, representatives of the new Ministry of Technology presided over discussions of how best to fulfill this target. Of the total number of requested, 70,000 were to be war-damaged units that would be rehabilitated; 30,000 would be totally rebuilt as part of the reconstruction efforts; and 25,000 new units would be provided specifically for industry and building cooperatives. One-third of the units would be single-family houses and the rest would be in apartment buildings.¹⁵⁴

For the next six months, Jiří Štursa's subcommittee worked on designs for standardized apartment and single-family houses that would come to be known as "Two-Year Plan Apartments." The group completed the designs just in time for the implementation of the Two-Year Plan on January 1, 1947.¹⁵⁵ In this first iteration, the sixty-five-square-meter (700-square-foot) furnished "family units" for four to six people had two bedrooms, a generous living room, WC, bathroom, pantry, and a small kitchen; these units could be built as apartments, row houses, or single-family houses (fig. 1.29). This design was similar to that of the seventy-square-meter (753-square-foot) apartments that Karel Janů was proposing at the Resettlement Office at the same time. The furnished "bachelor" apartments were limited to twenty-five square meters (269 square feet) and contained a single large living space, WC, bathroom, and small kitchen.¹⁵⁶

The plans follow closely those described by architect Karel Storch when he wrote in *Architektura ČSR* about the "international agreement [*shora*] in the housing standard" after visiting Stockholm, Helsinki, and Copenhagen as part of an official 1946 delegation.¹⁵⁷ He argued that "worldwide postwar housing construction is confronted by similar tasks. This similarity is not coincidental, but arises from the same requirements." After years disconnected from this international building culture, he wrote that Czechs and Slovaks needed to raise their housing standard to that of the more advanced northern Europeans. Echoing Teige's critique from the early 1930s, he declared that the German concept of the "minimum dwelling" was the result of "vacuous economic liberalism." For him, "the symbol of housing culture is the demarcation of function in each room, in every room—not only those in which the functional uses are given by their fixtures or other building systems."¹⁵⁸ The result was what he termed the "differentiated apartment," with a large living room; a small, ventilated kitchen; a pantry; separate WC and bathroom; and segregated sleeping rooms for parents and children, as shown in the illustration of a Norwegian apartment that accompanied the article (fig. 1.30). These

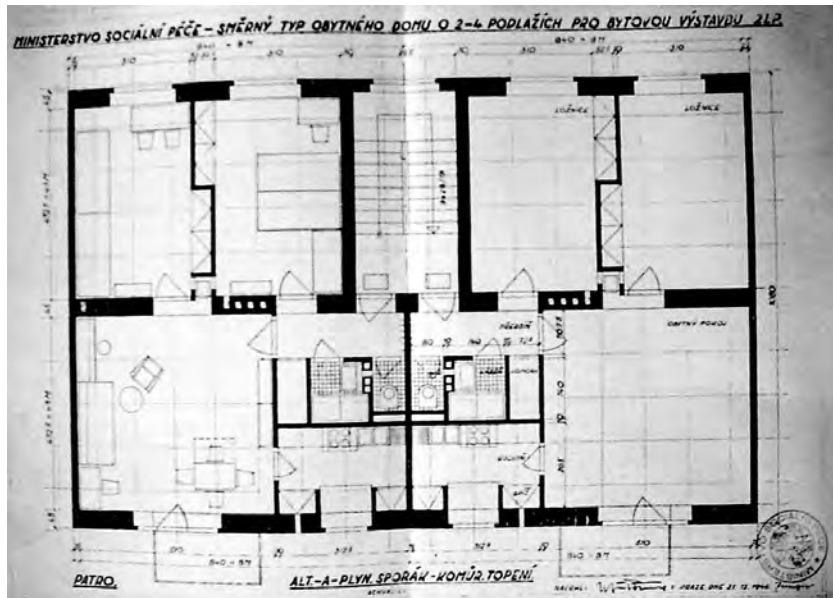


FIG. 1.29. JIŘÍ STURSA, TWO-YEAR PLAN APARTMENT DESIGNED UNDER THE AUSPICES OF THE MINISTRY OF LABOR AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS, 1946.

specifications matched those of the Two-Year Plan units and would influence the design of the first standardized units after 1948, known as the T-series.

The most ambitious and important housing initiative of the Two-Year Plan was the Model Housing Development program. With start-up funds from the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration (UNRRA), the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs set out to “build two or three housing developments, which would be tested and worked through in practical terms as examples for further building projects around the country.” Three Czech cities were chosen as the pilot sites: Most, in the borderlands; Kladno, a mining city about forty miles from Prague where the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia had been founded; and Ostrava, a mining and steel-producing city in northeastern Moravia.¹⁵⁹ To administer the three sites, local building associations were established under the supervision of Karel Pilát from the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs.

In each case, the building association members included representatives from the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs, local industrial concerns such as mines, chemical plants, and steel mills, and local and regional national committees. Some of the members were architects working for local enterprises or national committees, although these architects were not hired to do the

design work. The associations were responsible for developing the program, writing budgets, and choosing architects for the master plan and standardized building types with the goal of reusing them at other sites. In addition to the UNRRA funds, financial support came from local interest groups such as national enterprises operating in the area or local national committees. A specified number of the housing units were then reserved for the enterprises' employees or people designated by national committees. In the case of the Ostrava development, Vítkovice Iron Works was entitled to 20 percent of the units; the Ostrava-Karviná Regional Coal Mines and the Ostrava Chemical Enterprise each had 15 percent; and the regional, state, and local national committees claimed the remaining 50 percent.¹⁶⁰ In Kladno and Most, the local mining collectives and national committees were the primary beneficiaries of the housing apportionment.¹⁶¹

In each city, the building association hired four or five architects to work on the master plan and individual buildings. Although BAPS played no official role in project development, some of the architects involved were prominent members. In Kladno, the design group included Josef Havlíček and Václav Hlinský.¹⁶² Jiří Štursa worked on the teams in Most and Ostrava; Vladimír Meduna, who would later design the neighborhood of Poruba, was also on the Ostrava team.¹⁶³ The building sites, chosen for their proximity to local industries and the availability of existing city infrastructure, consisted of land already in the possession of the state, plus newly purchased individual tracts.¹⁶⁴ The Ostrava site was the largest, and the plan there was to build eighteen hundred units to house seventy-five hundred residents (fig. 1.31).¹⁶⁵ The Kladno and Most plans called for five thousand people in twelve hundred units (figs. 1.32 and 1.33).¹⁶⁶

Karel Pilát wrote that three important precedents had inspired the Model Housing Development plans: Ebenezer Howard's Garden City from 1898, Tony Garnier's Industrial City from 1917, and Le Corbusier's



FIG. 1.30. A. W. NYGAARD, APARTMENT IN THE HALDEN HOUSING DEVELOPMENT, NORWAY, 1946, FROM *ARCHITEKTURA ČSR* (1947).

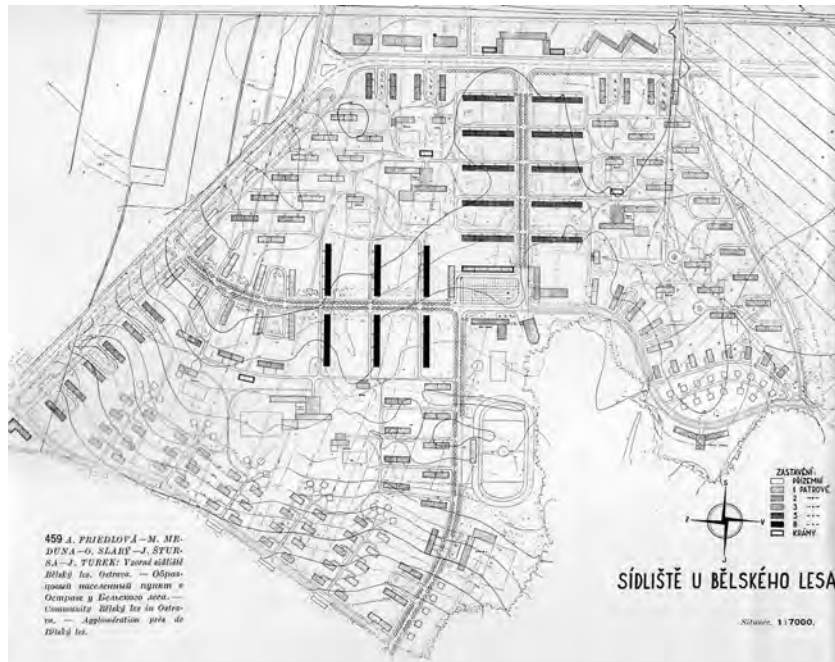


FIG. 1.31. ANNA FRIEDLOVÁ, VLADIMÍR MEDUNA, OTTO SLABÝ, JIŘÍ ŠTURSA, AND JAROSLAV TUREK, SITE PLAN OF MODEL HOUSING DEVELOPMENT IN OSTRAVA, 1947.

City for Three Million Inhabitants of 1922.¹⁶⁷ Like these precedents, each of the Model Housing Development project proposals included housing, schools, shopping areas, community centers, health clinics, parks and green spaces, garages, fire stations, and mass transportation to local industries and urban centers. In Ostrava, there was also a hotel, dormitory, and youth center in the main square. Housing was provided in a mix of single-family homes, row houses, and two- to five-story apartment buildings with a few taller buildings—eight-story housing blocks built in parallel rows in Ostrava and eleven-story towers in Kladno (figs. 1.34 and 1.35).¹⁶⁸

In Most and Ostrava, Jiří Štursa produced diagrams of the master plans, what he called “analyses of the gravitational circles” of the site, which illustrated the hierarchical relationships between the different programs and their distances from the housing clusters (fig. 1.36). These diagrams were descendants of the charts and diagrams of Architectural Working Group publications from the 1930s and those found in Janů’s 1946 book, *Socialistické budování (oč půjde ve stavebnictví a architektuře)*. For example, each sector in Most had two locations for services such as tailors, butchers, and hairstylists

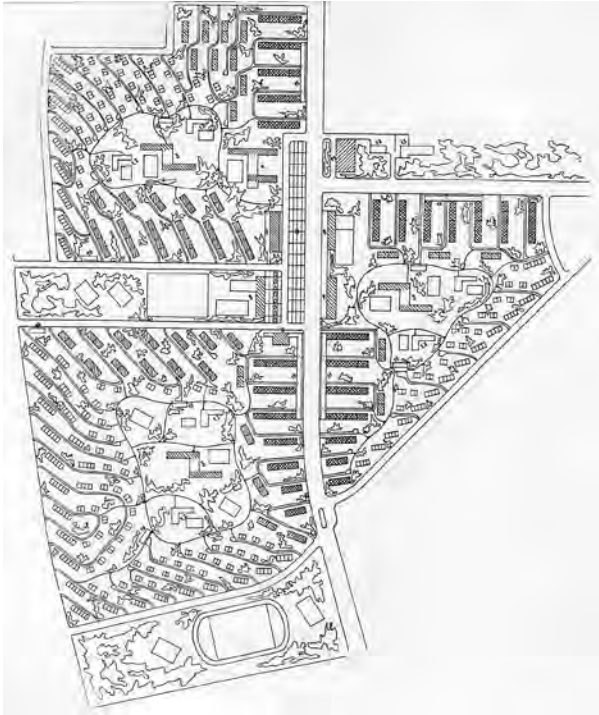


FIG. 1.32. JIŘÍ ŠTURSA, SITE PLAN FOR MODEL HOUSING DEVELOPMENT IN MOST, 1947.

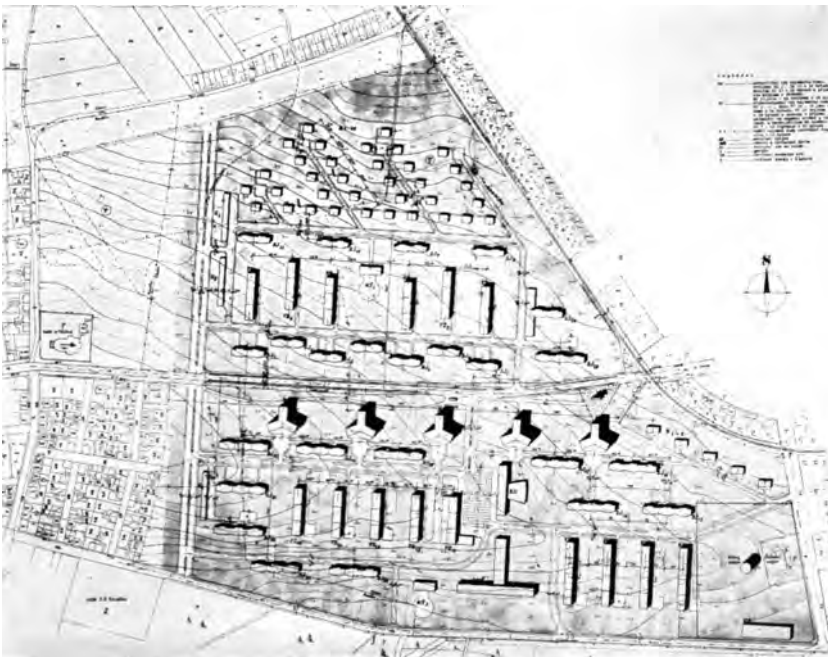


FIG. 1.33. JOSEF HAVLÍČEK, SITE PLAN FOR MODEL HOUSING DEVELOPMENT IN KLDADNO, 1947.

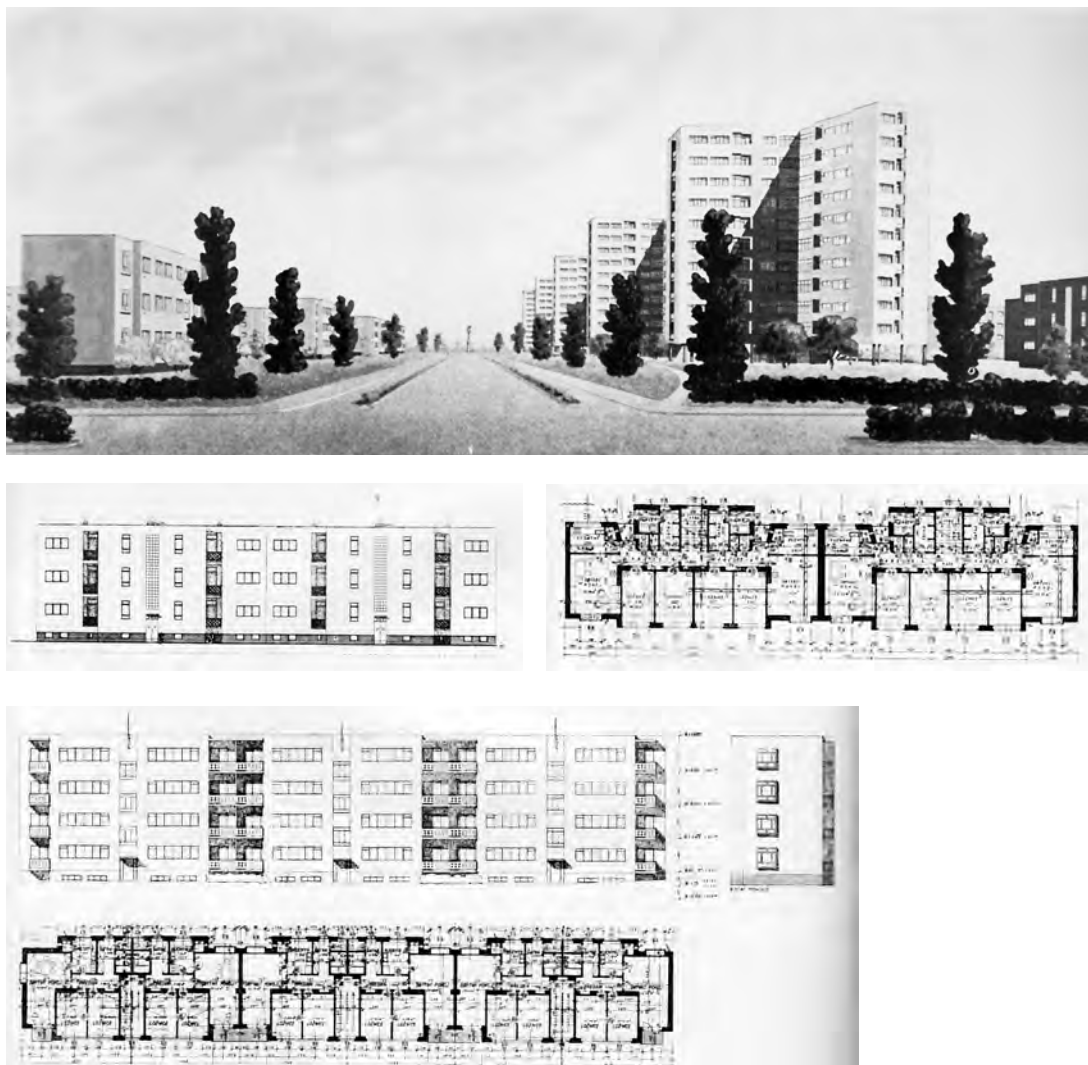


FIG. 1.34. JOSEF HAVLÍČEK, VÁCLAV HILSKÝ, MIROSLAV KONĚRZA, AND EMIL KOVÁŘÍK, MODEL HOUSING DEVELOPMENT IN KLDADNO, 1947.

and one grocery store; at the center of the development was a department store. The schools followed the same pattern, with at least three schools in each sector, one day-care center, one elementary school, one middle school, and a single high school in the center.¹⁶⁹ The Ostrava plan followed a similar distribution pattern, although the settlement was more dense, so fewer day-care centers and elementary schools were proposed, although one assumes each one was larger, since it was the distance to the service, not the num-

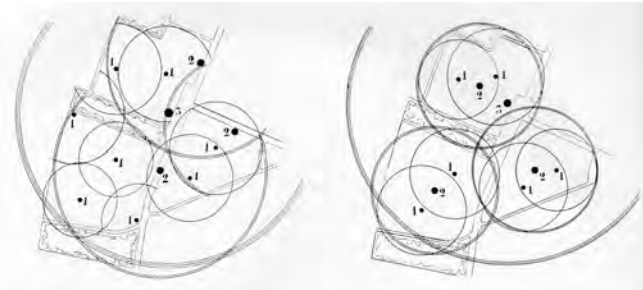


FIG. 1.35. JIŘÍ ŠTURSA, APARTMENT BUILDINGS FOR THE MODEL HOUSING DEVELOPMENT IN OSTRAVA, 1947.

FIG. 1.36. JIŘÍ ŠTURSA, DIAGRAMS SHOWING “ANALYSES OF THE GRAVITATIONAL CIRCLES” FOR THE MODEL HOUSING DEVELOPMENT IN MOST, 1947.

ber of people served, that was the determining factor. There was also a conscious effort to make the apartments equidistant from other amenities, such as transportation and shopping. According to the plans, residents would walk no more than ten minutes from their apartment to a tram stop and no more than three minutes to shop.¹⁷⁰

In addition to the master plans prepared by the four- and five-member teams, each architect submitted plans for individual buildings to a limit-

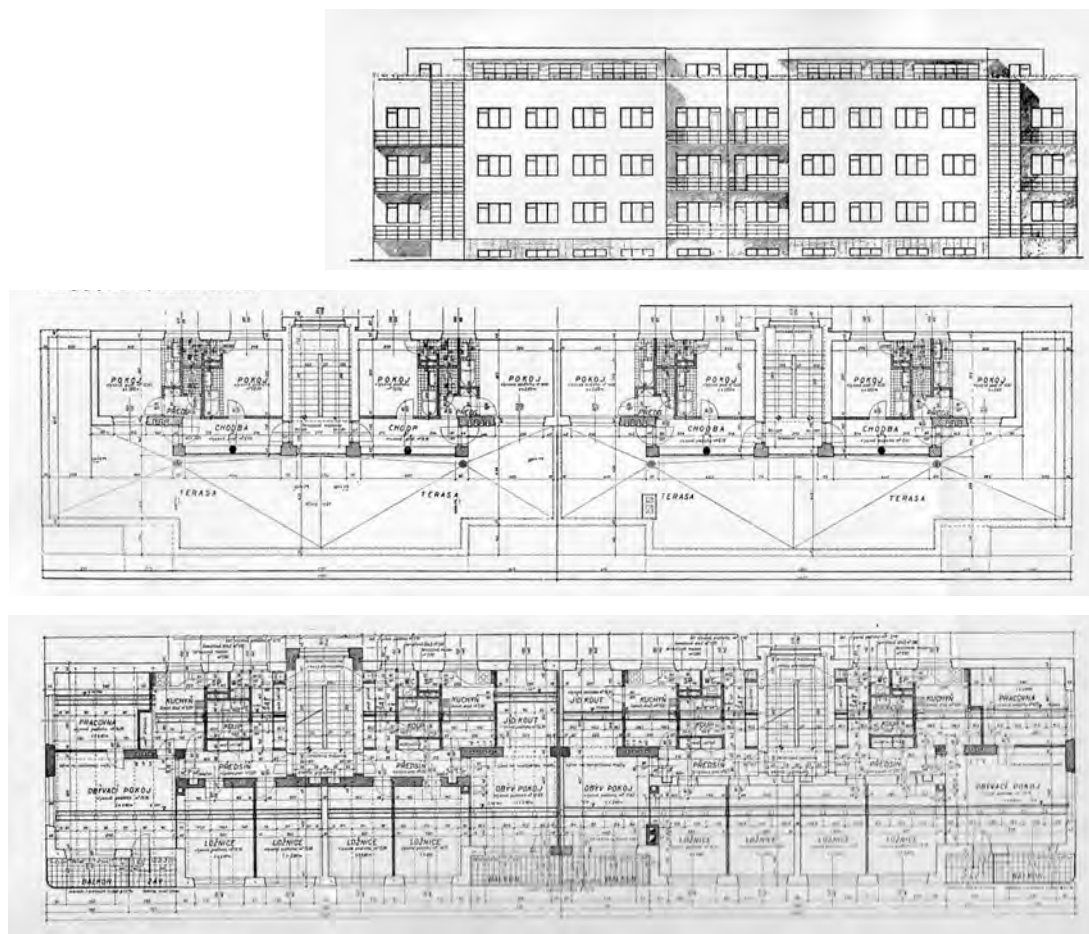


FIG. 1.37. ANNA FRIEDLOVÁ, APARTMENT BUILDING FOR THE MODEL HOUSING DEVELOPMENT IN OSTRAVA, 1947.

ed competition, the results of which were decided by the building association.¹⁷¹ Stylistically, the apartment buildings at each housing development were similar and consistent with the modernist tendencies of the period.¹⁷² They were simple, unadorned masonry and stucco buildings with flat roofs, industrial components, strong horizontal façade compositions and small balconies; some of the Ostrava buildings also had winter gardens (figs. 1.37 and 1.38). Some resembled Czech social housing projects of the 1930s, and others looked more like contemporary Scandinavian projects, which were copiously illustrated in *Architektura ČSR* in 1947 (fig. 1.39).

The apartments were typically two-bedroom units that followed Štursa's



FIG. 1.38. NURSERY AT THE MODEL HOUSING DEVELOPMENT IN KLADNO, 1951–1952.

FIG. 1.39. HSB COOPERATIVE, APARTMENT BUILDING, STOCKHOLM, SWEDEN, FROM *ARCHITEKTURA ČSR* (1947).

Two-Year Plan proposals and Storch's ideas about "differentiated apartments," although in most cases the units were larger, with eat-in kitchens or separate dining rooms. Some one-room bachelor apartments were also proposed; in Ostrava, these units were to be located on the penthouse floor of the five- and eight-story buildings, although they were never built. The most distinctive development was Kladno's, which had a combination of modest three-story blocks punctuated by eleven-story three-wing apartment towers on pilotis designed by Josef Havlíček, who was about to leave for New York to represent Czechoslovakia on the United Nations design team (figs. 1.40 and 1.41).¹⁷³

Despite these auspicious beginnings, the Model Housing Development



FIG. 1.40. JOSEF HAVLÍČEK, TOWER FOR MODEL HOUSING DEVELOPMENT IN KLDNO, 1947.

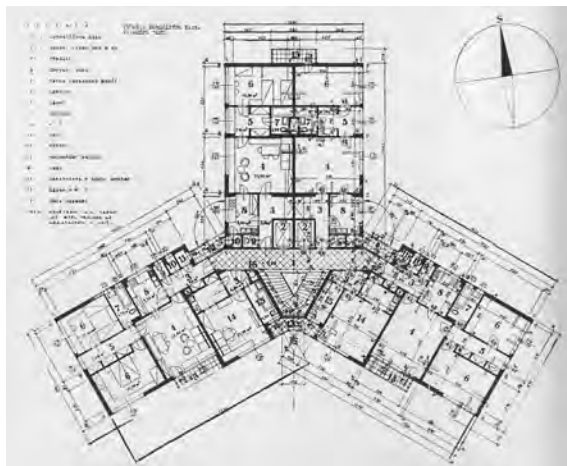


FIG. 1.41. JOSEF HAVLÍČEK, PLAN OF TOWER FOR MODEL HOUSING DEVELOPMENT IN KLDNO, 1947.



FIG. 1.42. TOWERS UNDER CONSTRUCTION AT THE MODEL HOUSING DEVELOPMENT IN KLDNO, C. 1958.



FIG. 1.43. TOWERS AT THE MODEL HOUSING DEVELOPMENT IN KLDNO, 2003.

program was not a success by any measure. Material and labor shortages, general disorganization, and a lack of urgency meant that little was accomplished at these sites in 1947 and 1948. Twenty of the three-story, fifteen-unit apartment blocks designed by Josef Havlíček and Václav Hlinský were started in Kladno in 1947, but according to Havlíček, “construction then stagnated” until after the Communist takeover in February 1948. He made changes to the master plan in 1951 and again in 1956; the six tower blocks that line the main avenue of the development were completed in 1959 (figs. 1.42 and 1.43).¹⁷⁴



FIG. 1.44. ANNA FRIEDLOVÁ, APARTMENT BUILDING AT THE MODEL HOUSING DEVELOPMENT IN OSTRAVA AFTER RENOVATION, 2006.



FIG. 1.45. WINTER GARDENS ON A FRIEDLOVÁ BUILDING, 2006.

In Ostrava, only fifteen of the seventy buildings planned for the first phase had been started by 1948.¹⁷⁵ Jiří Štursa's proposal for parallel rows of eight-story blocks lining the main north-south boulevard was abandoned. Instead, in September 1947, the building association chose local architects Anna Friedlová and Jaroslav Turek, members of the master plan committee, to build eleven and four apartment blocks, respectively.¹⁷⁶ These buildings are along the northeast boundary of the neighborhood, facing north-south but following the curve of the street along the edge of the settlement.¹⁷⁷ Friedlová's four-story blocks included 112 two-room apartments in seven buildings and 116 one-room bachelor apartments in four buildings (figs. 1.44 and 1.45). At almost ninety square meters (969 square feet), her two-room units were similar to but larger than Štursa's Two-Year Plan units, with either a separate dining room or work space and more storage.¹⁷⁸ Turek's four buildings were smaller, only three stories high, and less elegant, with large open balconies on the entrance side and smaller balconies at the rear (fig. 1.46). No community buildings, schools, or commercial businesses were started during this time, leaving the residents of the few completed units far from the everyday services they had expected. They would have to wait for them until another construction phase in the mid-1950s (fig. 1.47).

These Model Housing Development neighborhoods, which would become



FIG. 1.46. JAROSLAV TUREK, APARTMENT BUILDING AT THE MODEL HOUSING DEVELOPMENT IN OSTRAVA, 2006.

Kladno-Rozdělov, Most-Podžatecká, and Ostrava-Bělský Les (known as Stal-ingrad from 1950 to 1961), remained under construction throughout the 1950s. In Ostrava, the Bělský Les development was never finished. In the end, each was built to a different master plan than first proposed. There was some continuity on the design teams, however. Josef Havlíček continued his work in Kladno until the end of the 1950s. Jiří Štursa remained with the Most project through the 1940s and rejoined the Ostrava team in early 1950s.¹⁷⁹ In all three cases, the majority of the developments were completed with standardized buildings developed in research institutes after 1948, illustrating the notable shift from individual commissions to mass production.

Despite these problems, the Model Housing Development projects taught many lessons. It was already apparent during the Two-Year Plan that labor and materials needed to be carefully considered and aggressively sought out. The coordination of multiple investors, contractors, and architects meant that there were complicated bureaucratic and decision-making processes that would hold up the pace of construction. Early indicators of the problems asso-



FIG. 1.47. OSTRAVA MODEL HOUSING DEVELOPMENT UNDER CONSTRUCTION AROUND 1954. THE FIFTEEN TWO-YEAR PLAN BUILDINGS BY FRIEDLOVÁ AND TUREK APPEAR DARKER ON THE RIGHT SIDE OF THE PHOTOGRAPH. THE FRIEDLOVÁ BUILDINGS RUN PARALLEL ALONG THE ROAD ON THE RIGHT SIDE, AND THE TUREK BUILDINGS ARE IN THE UPPER RIGHT-HAND CORNER PERPENDICULAR TO THE FRIEDLOVÁ BUILDINGS.

ciated with individual authorship were also evident. In the search to find a strategy that could be repeated around the country, standardized and typified buildings were much more attractive than hiring individual architects to produce site-specific designs.

Even with knowledge of these challenges, the post-1948 government embraced planning on this scale and encouraged neighborhood-centered projects that sought to provide shared services to large numbers of residents in low-rise, high-density developments. The high-rise, high-density, and high-style Litvínov Collective House would be written off as too expensive and extravagant. Instead, the more dispersed Model Housing Development exemplar won out. The execution of such projects would, nevertheless, prove challenging throughout the communist period as labor and material shortages disrupted schedules, encouraged shoddy craftsmanship, and made it almost impossible to deliver as many buildings as promised.

THE END OF BAPS

In the summer of 1947, with only a few projects under construction and the ideology of the Union of Socialist Architects dominating BAPS, other constitutive groups within the organization became convinced that something new was needed. In July, a group of architects representing practitioners in Bohemia, Moravia-Silesia, and Slovakia announced the formation of the Union of Architects in Czechoslovakia (*Unie architektů ČSR*), a politically unaffiliated organization that would have a professional rather than ideological point of view. Unlike the Prague-focused BAPS, the Union of Architects in Czechoslovakia would include architects from all three regions and conduct its business in both Czech and Slovak.¹⁸⁰ A critic of BAPS, Jaroslav Pokorný, president of the Architectural Group of the Association of Czech Architects and Engineers, would head the new organization.¹⁸¹ In its bylaws, the group promised to “pursue aggressive ideological activities to improve the level of Czechoslovak architecture, urbanism and building culture” and “create conditions for planning and economic design activities of intense artistic and professional quality.”¹⁸² The group claimed the right to represent Bohemian, Moravian-Silesian, and Slovak architects at international events, in competitions, and at conferences; to create an executive board with members from all three regions; to hold general assembly meetings and elect board members; and to act as the official regulating body for the architectural profession.¹⁸³

With the support of several of the BAPS associations (although not the Union of Socialist Architects), the Union of Architects in Czechoslovakia had overtaken BAPS as the representative body for the profession by early 1948.¹⁸⁴ The nascent Switzerland-based Union of International Architects (*Union Internationale des Architectes* or *UIA*), which was planning a June 1948 conference in Lausanne, contacted the Union of Architects, rather than BAPS, in January to send representatives to Lausanne for the plenary meeting.¹⁸⁵ Within a few weeks, even the Union of Socialist Architects had resigned itself to the change, and along with the other constituent groups of BAPS, it began transferring its full membership list to the new organization in mid-February.¹⁸⁶ The Communist Party took control of the government on February 25, 1948, interrupting the transfer of members from BAPS to the Union of Architects and forever changing the course of Czechoslovak history.

2 • TYPIFICATION AND STANDARDIZATION

Stavoprojekt and the Transformation of Architectural Practice

The lack of living space near the new industrial enterprises is bringing political pressure to build more housing units. In order to relieve this pressure as quickly as possible, quick and cheap construction of new living space is necessary. This is possible with the industrialization or mechanization of building practice. Czechoslovak Building Works memo to the Ministry of Technology, 1949

Immediately after the Communist Party took control of the Czechoslovak government on February 25, 1948, action committees were formed in all professional and educational organizations to purge them of politically undesirable members. As historian John Connelly describes in his book on higher education in postwar Central Europe, within days of the February 25 takeover, chaos ensued at universities as “revolutionary” students and professors on the Action Committee of Higher Education forced many popular professors out of their jobs.¹ The new government’s first decrees related to architecture came on February 27, resulting in the creation of a new department “S” at the Ministry of Technology. This new department would be responsible for the administration of the nationalized building industry, a step that was formally announced at a Communist Party conference on February 29.² The process of consolidating the various associations within BAPS into a single group, a transition already initiated by the Union of Architects, seemed to ease the situation. The formation of the Central Action Committee of Czechoslo-

vak Architects (Ústředního akčního výboru architektů ČSR), led by Jaroslav Pokorný and F.M. Černý, president and general secretary of the union, respectively, was not announced until March 15. At that point, the editorial board and circulation of the magazine *Architektura ČSR* were taken over immediately, although Oldřich Starý remained editor.³

In instructions sent one week later to the organizations in BAPS, the leaders of the Central Action Committee wrote that since the establishment of the Union of Architects was not yet complete, each association had to form its own action committee and then choose one, two, or three “liquidators” to appoint to the committee. The letter stipulated that all activities of the member associations cease by March 31; this directive may already have been in place before February 25.⁴ There were certainly architects who suffered during this process, although the term “purge,” which is often associated with the action committees, does not seem appropriate in this case, since most architects who remained in the country were sympathetic to the Communist cause or decided to emigrate.⁵ Jaromír Krejcar was the most famous architect to leave. A star of the Devětsil generation and architect of the highly acclaimed Czechoslovak Pavilion at the 1937 Paris World’s Fair, he abandoned his teaching position at the Brno University of Technology in May 1948 and moved to England, where he died in 1949.⁶ No other high-profile architects left in the immediate aftermath of the Communist takeover.

Once the list of members and an agenda for the unified group were prepared, the Central Action Committee set out to completely reformulate the practice of architecture. By April 7, they were actively pursuing nationalized offices that would “give the possibility of employment for all architects and for the full development of the creative power of each individual according to his abilities and personal experiences.”⁷ The proposal was announced that month at the Congress of National Culture. Questions about the nature and meaning of these changes immediately arose from within the Union of Architects. Members were already concerned about losing control of their professional decisions in this environment.

In a draft report about the future organization of the nationalized offices, written in the summer of 1948 to convince architects of the positive aspects of the proposed changes, the benefits of the new system were summarized in this way:

This method of organizing architectural work frees the architect from all the adverse associated phenomena that until now have made his task more difficult and stopped him from dedicating himself fully to his creative mission. In these working collectives, everyone will be provided with the conditions to perfectly manage all work on the project, whose final form will be a manufacturing plan of a building. In this, the indivisibility of work, full respect for authorship, and

enhanced personal responsibility of the designer will be preserved. This new form of architectural work should not damage the position of architects, either ideologically or economically.⁸

This statement implied a compromise between the pursuit of an active discourse on form and aesthetics and the desire to move fully toward industrialization. Here the “creative mission” of the architect becomes that of an industrial designer working to design buildings produced as industrial objects, hence the goal of a manufacturing plan rather than a finished building.

Although there was an implicit acknowledgment that this new system would change the relationship of architects to their work, the author of the report attempted to assuage concerns about the mechanization of the process by emphasizing the continuing value of authorship and the ability to follow a project from start to finish. One can also read in this statement something of the dialectical tension between aesthetics and function that was fundamental to the discourse on socialist architecture throughout the 1940s. As the events of the next few years would show, architects were not prepared for the level of transformation that would occur with the September 1948 establishment of Stavoprojekt, the national system of state-run architecture and engineering offices.

From the Communist takeover in February 1948 through late 1950s, the doctrine of socialist realism changed the tone and direction of architectural practice. Tensions between the social and stylistic agendas that remained from the interwar years, along with the effects of the planned economy and the new emphasis on heavy industry, changed the roles of architecture and design professionals. Earlier interest in the industrialization of building created a continuity reflected in both personnel and organizational strategies. In the first few years of the new regime, the immediate concern of leaders in the architectural administration was finding a better system to deliver projects on time and within budget. Aesthetics and appropriately “socialist” forms were not institutional priorities until 1950. In many ways, the transition from capitalism to socialism was a process rather than a change that occurred instantaneously with the shift of political power to the Communists in February 1948.

The overlaps and intersections in Czechoslovak culture before and after 1948 have received relatively little attention because scholars have focused largely on the discontinuities brought by World War II and the Communist takeovers across the region from 1945 to 1949.⁹ Existing accounts of the first decade of Communist rule are generally preoccupied with issues of high politics and foreign policy, such as the authoritarian nature of the new regime, the imposition of Stalinism, the trials and imprisonment of party “enemies,” and, to a lesser extent, the loss of cultural and intellectual freedom.¹⁰ With access to archives and increased attention to the postwar period, scholars

are now revealing a picture of postwar Czechoslovakia that calls into question the classic image of a monolithic, all-powerful Communist Party that changed little from its rise to power in 1948 to Khrushchev's order to "de-Stalinize" in 1961. Instead, the sources show an unmistakable series of paradigm shifts occurring throughout the 1950s as the regime experimented with the forms and practices of its state apparatus.

Within the realm of architecture, projects from 1948 to 1950—what is proposed here as a transitional period—show that the state struggled to define parameters and working methods for the socialist design sector. This hesitancy allowed the architectural leadership to act relatively independently and with its own agenda, at least for a few years. The building industry as a whole also had difficulty adjusting to the planned economy and the loss of the supply-and-demand model. All the while, new housing and community services continued to be provided in key industrial zones, although at a slower pace than expected. Both inside and outside the profession, reforming the process of taking a building from design to construction was seen as the first step toward achieving a truly "socialist" architecture, one that was in the spirit of collective work not only in its social aspirations but in its economic formation as well.

The Stavoprojekt system as set out in this first phase formed the basis of the socialist design sector for more than forty years.¹¹ With the exception of the years 1950–1955, when the administration was most concerned with establishing the aesthetic presence of socialist realism, architectural design functioned until 1990 within the parameters of standardization, typification, and industrialization as defined in this early period. Although the model of the Soviet Union had become increasingly present in the day-to-day administration of the state by 1950, the first iteration of the socialist design sector owed more to the legacy of Czechoslovakia's own industrial and architectural history than to directives from its allies in Moscow. The creation of BAPS in 1945 and its reformulation as the Union of Architects in early 1948 provided a framework for the transition to state-run practice. The projects of the Two-Year Plan, such as the Model Housing Developments, set precedents for the construction of standardized units in neighborhood configurations funded by public-private partnerships. Aspects of the business model of the Baťa Shoe Company in Zlín were also found in the structures of Stavoprojekt and the Czechoslovak Building Works.

Despite these continuities, the importance of February 1948 to the personal experiences and collective consciousness of Czech and Slovak architects should not be underestimated or diminished. It was a time of profound change for architects as they adjusted to the new economic, political, and social context of state socialism. In these circumstances and despite the good intentions of many people, the profession was forced to make difficult and ultimately

unpopular concessions. The idealistic framework for state-run practice advertised by the Action Committee and the Union of Architects in the spring and summer of 1948 proved untenable. Architectural practice in a planned economy neither allowed for the “full development of the creative power of each individual according to his abilities and personal experiences” nor created the conditions for an architect to “dedicat[e] himself fully to his creative mission.”¹² It became instead, in the tradition of 1930s scientific functionalism, “a component of scientifically governed production and the distribution of vital means,” ever more important in the early years of Czechoslovak communism.¹³

STAVOPROJEKT AND THE CZECHOSLOVAK BUILDING WORKS

For a few months after the Communist takeover, the organization of architectural practice changed little as the transition to the new system proceeded slowly. Architects in private practice worked on existing commissions. The housing projects of the Two-Year Plan continued; most were funded partly or wholly by public money. New projects, however, were rare, since the restructuring of the nationalized building industry had ended new private commissions. By the fall of 1948, Stavoprojekt, and the consistent employment that it would offer, was a welcome opportunity for many practitioners.

The changes began in June 1948, when, responding to political and public pressure for better results, Czechoslovakia’s independent and highly diversified building industry was reborn as a massive national enterprise, the Czechoslovak Building Works (Československý stavební závod). Although many large corporations and enterprises in key sectors such as mining and insurance had been nationalized as early as 1946, the building industry had remained largely in private hands. This changed with a government decree in April 1948 that was retroactive to January 1, 1948, ordering all businesses with more than fifty employees to be handed over to the state; building concerns were consolidated into the Czechoslovak Building Works under the control of the Ministry of Technology. From June to December of that year, the organization worked to bring more than two thousand remaining private small businesses under its control, in order to “take over and centralize a large number of private firms of a predominantly workshop character, to undertake their consolidation, to integrate them organizationally and financially, and to transition them to large-scale building production.”¹⁴

These changes had an acute effect on architects and building engineers, who often worked for themselves or in small offices. Under the guidance of the Central Action Committee and the Union of Architects, private firms were liquidated and those architects who wanted to continue practicing were assigned to the Czechoslovak Building Works’s newly created design wing, Stavoprojekt. Established in September 1948, the organization was named

after the combination of the Czech words meaning “to build” (*stavět*) and “to design” (*projektovat*).¹⁵ Within a tripartite hierarchy of regional architecture ateliers, regional engineering offices, and research centers headquartered in Prague, the organization had 1,233 employees by January 1949 in capacities ranging from architects and building engineers to draftsmen, accountants, statisticians, and secretaries.¹⁶ By midyear, Stavoprojekt had more than 4,500 employees, and four years later the number was more than 11,000.¹⁷ Deputy Director Otakar Nový proudly proclaimed in January 1949 that with its creation, “[Stavoprojekt] became the largest design firm in Europe and probably the world.”¹⁸ The Czechoslovak Building Works would be a short-lived experiment; it was disbanded in October 1951. However, Stavoprojekt, as an architectural entity, would exist in various administrative forms and under an assortment of names until the early 1990s.¹⁹

Much like today’s multinational conglomerates, the Czechoslovak Building Works functioned as the umbrella organization for more than one hundred state-owned but individually managed “national enterprises.”²⁰ These included construction companies, product manufacturers, engineering firms, and Stavoprojekt. Among this group, 70 percent were in the Czech lands and 30 percent in Slovakia, reflecting the historical strength of industry in the Czech lands and the more rural character of Slovakia.²¹ Day-to-day business between the subsidiaries was conducted as before, with proprietary budgets, management structures, bidding, and contracting procedures. In effect, the Czechoslovak Building Works simulated competitive market conditions. Multiple entities offered the same products and services, such as cement, prefabricated building materials, or the installation of heating systems.²² Choices were then made for each project based on criteria such as cost and quality. The objectives of the companies were significantly different, however, as they no longer sought to make money but to meet their planning quotas. As Hungarian economist János Kornai has shown, this economic distinction between capitalist and socialist systems would have long-term negative consequences for the health of communist economies.²³

With the exception of state employment, increases in public financing, and limitations on building types, there were few outright changes in the process of bringing a project from design to completion in these early years. The three central actors in a project—the client, the designer, and the building contractor—remained distinct entities within the new system. Design and construction tasks were administered through the Czechoslovak Building Works; all design work was handled by Stavoprojekt; and construction jobs were assigned to the various regional construction companies in the system, including Konstruktiva and Pragostav in Prague, Pozemní stavby, which had branches in Brno, Opava, and Zlín, and Obnova in Bratislava.²⁴

Much like the projects of the Two-Year Plan, national committees, national enterprises, and ministries acted as clients and investors. The national committees, at the state, regional, and local levels, sent requests to the Czechoslovak Building Works for projects such as new housing units, civic buildings, roads, and schools. Ministries such as the Ministry of Technology, the Ministry of Fuel and Energy (Ministerstvo paliv a energetiky), and the Ministry of Mining Industries and Mineralogy (Ministerstvo hutního průmyslu a rudných dolů) needed industrial infrastructure, including factories, warehouses, and administrative offices, as well as workers' housing. Enterprises under the control of the ministries worked to secure resources at the national and local levels. Therefore, although the number and variety of potential clients were greatly reduced, architectural design still occurred within the traditional boundaries of the architect-client relationship.

In the case of Ostrava, local mining and steel enterprises nationalized in 1945 and 1946 financed many of the housing units constructed between 1946 and 1951. Once completed, units were designated for the managers and employees of the sponsoring enterprises. For example, 1,000 standardized duplexes were scheduled to be built in Ostrava by 1950 under the sponsorship of the Regional National Committee in Ostrava and a consortium called Ostrava-Karviná Regional Coal Mines (Ostravsko-karvinské kamenouhelné doly, or OKD).²⁵ According to a directive from the State Planning Office, "to the largest degree possible, the [unit] quota will be used to fulfill the requests of the mines, iron works, and heavy industry. We emphasize in particular that the construction of houses for the iron works should enable the recruitment of workers, and therefore it is necessary to support their requests as much as possible."²⁶ In the end, only 493 units were completed by 1951, and, as requested, they were allocated to heavy industry: 300 to the Ostrava-Karviná Regional Coal Mines, 74 to the Vítkovice Iron Works; 29 to the Czechoslovak Building Works; and 90 to smaller enterprises in the region.²⁷ This example illustrates how quickly architecture, and housing in particular, became an industrial product used to bolster heavy industry, rather than a practice that focused on creativity or expression. It also demonstrated the relationship between the regime's materialist thinking and architecture's role in delivering what Marxism-Leninism described as the "material values" of society.²⁸

TRANSFORMING THE PROFESSION

This conceptual shift required sympathetic leadership for the building industry. In the months after February 1948, the new character and composition of the administration began to emerge. Members of the Union of Socialist Architects had long been enthusiastic about the prospects for the profession within a nationalized system, and they brought this optimism to the leadership

of BAPS. With the transition to the Union of Architects, just before the Communist takeover, there was still widespread support for state-sponsored architectural work, although the focus shifted from collective work to achieving high professional standards. As it did for other creative professionals, such as artists, writers, and musicians, a nationalized system offered architects something they had never experienced—the opportunity for consistent, full-time employment and secure funding for their projects.²⁹ Otakar Nový, deputy director of Stavoprojekt and head of the architecture ateliers in this period, recalled that many architects saw the creation of the national ateliers as the fulfillment of the program of the interwar years: “Socialist design institutes were not forced on anyone through legislation, but originated with the principled, well thought out ideas of the international avant-gardes—the Soviet constructivists, our Union of Socialist Architects, the Bauhaus and CIAM—about the new communal mission of architecture, the necessity of industrializing the building industry, typification, and standardization. Herein lies the contribution of the Czechoslovak architectural avant-garde[:] the power of their authentic socialist pathos and international example.”³⁰ This explains, in part, why the concept of national ateliers was widely embraced by architects in the late 1940s.

Intentionally or not, Nový’s explanation overlooked the contentious discussions that accompanied the shift from private to state-run practice. Despite positive messages from the Communist Party, the leadership of Stavoprojekt, and *Architektura ČSR*, the transition to a nationalized system of design proved difficult and ultimately disappointing for many. As architect and architectural historian Marie Benešová reflects, “Things were not as simple [as represented in the journals]. Just as with the question of the organization of design work, many surprises still awaited our architects in the domain of creative ideology.”³¹ Although it was impossible at such an early moment to fully understand the implications of these institutional changes, especially in light of the emphasis being given to the role of designers in “building socialism,” many architects intuitively sensed that their control over the profession might be at risk under the new regime.

Early participants in the discussions about nationalizing architectural practice were wary of the potential consequences of state control. In April 1948, the Central Action Committee proposed a system of national ateliers that embodied the socialist ideal of collective artistic work. An oversight group called the Architectural Council of Stavoprojekt was created during the initial phase to combat complaints from members of the Union of Architects who feared that Stavoprojekt might “only mechanically put forward the concepts of functional building methods,” rather than “valuing their work as something creative.”³² The Architectural Council existed until 1951, under the leadership of Jiří Kroha. Despite the hope of some architects, it did not devel-

op into a counterbalance against the push toward standardization, which was increasingly seen as an inevitable result of state socialist planning. Instead, under Kroha's direction, it was mobilized in late 1949 to pressure Stavoprojekt to adopt socialist realist methods.³³

With respect to the building industry, the first critical task for the Communist government in the summer of 1948 was to appoint directors for the Czechoslovak Building Works and Stavoprojekt. They needed strong and loyal allies to head these organizations since the success of their economic programs depended on improving the country's industrial infrastructure. Although the problems of the Two-Year Plan remained, it was easier to implement radical solutions with total control of the economy. Goals included increasing output from heavy industries, expanding public transportation systems, and finding solutions to the critical housing shortage. Responsibility for these projects fell to the architects and engineers at Stavoprojekt. Despite the large number of well-established and experienced interwar modernists who remained in Czechoslovakia after February 1948, it was Karel Janů and Jiří Voženílek, from the Architectural Working Group, who were appointed to the top jobs—Janů as director of the Czechoslovak Building Works and Voženílek as director of Stavoprojekt.

These appointments revealed a lot about the motives and concerns of the Communist Party in the chaotic first months of the new regime.³⁴ Marie Benešová, who began her career in the late 1940s, recalls that the architectural community saw Janů and Voženílek as instruments of the party, brought in to “translate” the wishes of the Central Committee, the party's most elite leadership body.³⁵ Janů's appointment to head the Czechoslovak Building Works, when he was only thirty-nine years old, was also a reward for his loyal service at the Settlement Office and his long-standing public commitment to the industrialization of architecture and the nationalization of the building industry. Jiří Voženílek, on the other hand, brought different life experiences and professional expertise to his job as head of Stavoprojekt. According to an official summary of Voženílek's early career, he had been brought to Prague in 1948 to “organize the socialist design sector” on the Zlín model, a connection that had far-reaching implications for Stavoprojekt's early years.³⁶ His professional experience and political credentials, as well as his relationship to Janů, made Voženílek a clear choice to oversee the long-awaited establishment of a national design sector.

In their new positions, Janů and Voženílek faced an immense and politically charged task. The government was proclaiming an “emergency” in the building industry in 1949, and it expected the new organizations to quickly find efficient and cost-effective solutions to the crisis, particularly in housing.³⁷ The importance of housing was reinforced in the First Five-Year Plan,

set to begin on January 1, 1949, in which 22 percent of the total building budget was allocated for housing units, with similar amounts for industry (25 percent) and for bridges, roads, and water supply (23 percent).³⁸ The failure of the building program to produce the projected number of housing units during the Two-Year Plan helped to set the agenda for the post-1948 reorganization. Although the building industry as a whole claimed to meet 66 percent of its Two-Year Plan targets, the housing sector had performed poorly.³⁹ According to State Planning Office figures, only 20 percent of 61,000 anticipated housing units had been completed; another 69 percent were still under construction and 11 percent had not been started.⁴⁰ This weak record was attributed to three primary problems: an inadequate supply of building materials, a shortage of skilled labor, and a lack of streamlined practices in architecture offices.

STAVOPROJEKT'S OBJECTIVES

Stavoprojekt set out to address these issues immediately. Proposed remedies included the standardization of working methods and documentation, the centralization of resources and information, and the creation of a strong institutional hierarchy. In its first configuration, thirteen architecture ateliers and thirteen corresponding engineering offices were established in major regional centers. The engineering administration created specialized offices for services such as surveying, cost estimation, and terrain improvement as well as for specific construction types, such as steel buildings, bridges, roads, and water supply infrastructure.

At the center of the new organization were the research centers, including ten divisions for investigating methods and practices such as documentation, statistics, new materials research, and master planning, and the high-priority Typification and Standardization Institute (Typisací a normalizační ústav) with its thirteen departments, including those for industry, agriculture, education, recreation, transportation, and housing. Research centers had been central to the BAPS platform in 1945, although none was established. Jiří Voženílek himself had led the BAPS committee on research centers from Zlín, and he directed an institute after 1951.⁴¹ Despite the large number of departments in this research hierarchy, there was no division in the system responsible for creative or theoretical aspects of design such as the history of design, the integration of the fine arts, or the study of aesthetics. This oversight made sense in the context of the short-term agenda, although it would have consequences a few years later, when these issues gained more political currency and it became apparent that Voženílek's institutional framework was not equipped to respond to arguments put forward by supporters of socialist realism.

Stavoprojekt's official inauguration was celebrated on January 7–8, 1949, in Prague. The meeting provided an opportunity for the new leadership to

present their architectural agenda to an enthusiastic but cautious audience of design professionals. At the meeting, Czechoslovak Building Works director Janů proclaimed, “It is known what kind of obstacles stood in the way of fulfilling the Two-Year Plan and what kind of difficulties had to be overcome. Most of all it has been shown that since the building industry was in private hands, it wasn’t possible to plan. The industry was far more affected by this than was accounted for in the Two-Year Plan. February brought a pay-off. The building industry was delivered into the hands of the people, [and] it was possible to proceed to direct planning.” Janů announced emergency measures that had been taken in September 1948, including an increase in the budget, an evaluation of the availability and distribution of building materials, and the development of a new operating plan. Addressing the concerns of his audience, Janů argued that these changes meant that their proposals were more likely to result in finished buildings, delivered on time and to their specifications.⁴²

In addition to the promise of more abundant resources, Janů appealed to the architects’ egos by emphasizing their central position in the new system:

It is most important for us in Stavoprojekt that you no longer exist as just some specialists on the periphery of economic life but that with this event you are moving into the mainstream and you hold the key to the success of the Five-Year Plan. It never used to happen that the government discussed normalization and typification of buildings or that the central planning commission was concerned with design activities, or designing at all, or that buildings in the Five-Year Plan could be provided through regular planning. This means something to us. It is now our job to draw the most important conclusions from this. Designers are becoming today’s fighters, and the questions of design are put into a completely new light, into a new situation that didn’t exist this way before.⁴³

Through the image of architects as “fighters” on the front lines of the struggle to fulfill the Five-Year Plan, Janů reinforced the notion that architecture and architects would play an essential role in “building socialism.”⁴⁴ His use of such imagery appears to have been a calculated strategy to gain support or at least cooperation from his less enthusiastic colleagues. Even for those who were unhappy with the choice of leadership or the structure of Stavoprojekt, there must have been some optimism about the central role being given to “design activities.”

One of the strategies employed to smooth the transition from a studio-based architectural culture to one focused on production was to foster closer contact between architects and engineers. This strategy was implemented most clearly in the Typification and Standardization Institute, which was at the center of the Stavoprojekt organizational chart not only in representational terms but also in the nature of its mission to bring together design and industrial production. At the Stavoprojekt inauguration, deputy director

Nový stated, “Stavoprojekt must avoid one risk, which is becoming a cult of designers with a fixed orientation. In the projects that await us, we will be able to express all of our technological capacity and creative powers. . . . Engineering offices are just as important as the architectural ateliers, and [engineers] should feel just as at home within Stavoprojekt as architects.”⁴⁵ This ideal of architecture as the marriage of creative architects and practical engineers had the potential to enhance the overall quality of design work by creating lines of communication between these disciplines. The concept of dialectical materialism was also at play in the relationship between “technological capacity” and “creative powers.”

Many of the speeches emphasized the themes of rationalization, standardization, and factory production. Stavoprojekt director Voženílek stated, “The achievement of the building industry depends first and foremost on how quickly it succeeds in reorganizing the scattered debris of handicraft businesses into enterprises governed by planning and the method of industrial production.”⁴⁶ Nový added, “In order to transition the building industry from handicraft to production, we must transform our building sites into factories. . . . The productivity of industry guarantees above all the organization of work and preparation for production. Stavoprojekt is entrusted with the preparation for building production from the basic concept all the way to the last detail.”⁴⁷ Architects were being praised and encouraged not only from within the profession but also by representatives from the ministries and the Communist Party, who reinforced the state’s commitment to the building industry. Comrade Pánek, the deputy secretary for building from the Central Committee, reminded the attendees of their importance: “Because the building work is so considerable, it is necessary in the Five-Year Plan to find new methods of production and work. As it has already been said, successful fulfillment of the Five-Year Plan depends on production. That is why so much attention is also turned toward the building industry. That is why during the last meeting of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia, General Secretary Slanský said that we must devote an exceptional amount of attention to the building industry.”⁴⁸ For the architects and engineers of the nascent Stavoprojekt system, most of whom were already Communist Party members, a sense of purpose could be found in this rhetoric about being at the center of the socialist struggle. As the language suggests, however, from the perspective of the Communist Party, the building industry, rather than architecture, design, or the figure of the architect per se, was the object of reform.

Architektura ČSR was the most public venue for promoting and reinforcing this agenda within the ranks of Stavoprojekt. The 1949 volume of the journal can be described as a Stavoprojekt primer for architects, reiterating and



FIG. 2.1. FIRST PAGE OF THEME ISSUE ON SOCIAL WELFARE FROM *ARCHITEKTURA ČSR* (1949).

FIG. 2.2. ILLUSTRATION FROM THE *ARCHITEKTURA ČSR* THEME ISSUE ON AGRICULTURE.

expanding upon the ideas put forward at the inauguration. The first double issue focused on the proposals of the Typification and Standardization Institute's Department for Housing, with a few examples from the Department for Industry; subsequent issues in 1949 focused on education, exhibition design and competitions, social welfare, health care, and agriculture (figs. 2.1 and 2.2).⁴⁹ The issues on culture and health care devoted significant space to competition projects submitted by teams working at regional Stavoprojekt ateliers.

The architectural competition, a concept that dates back to the early

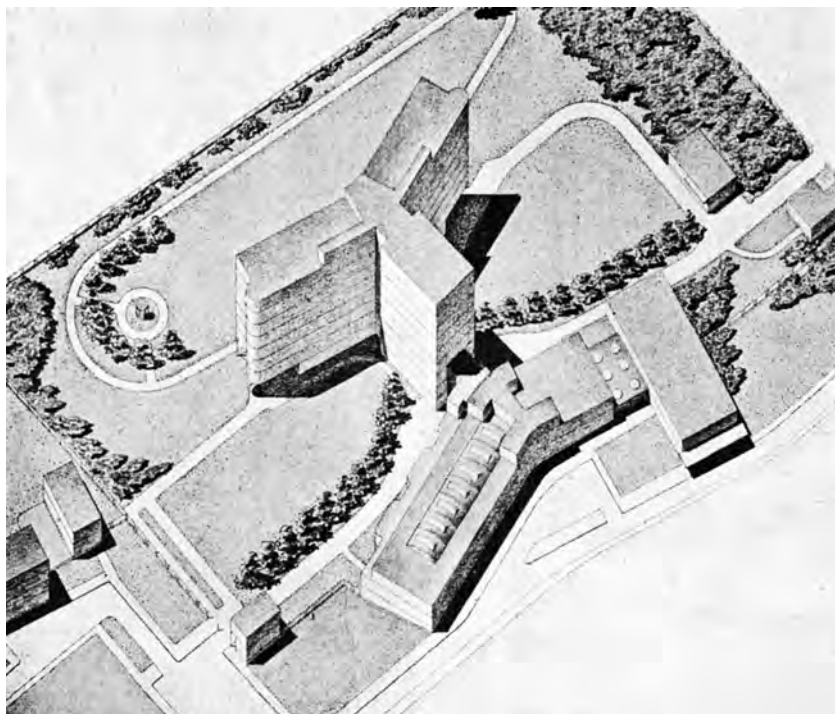


FIG. 2.3. AUGUSTA MÜLLEROVÁ AND LADISLAV MACHOŇ, COMPETITION PROJECT FOR A HOSPITAL, 1949.

modern period in Europe, became a favorite tool of the administration as part of the campaign to transition architecture from an individual to a collective endeavor. The Two-Year Plan competitions for projects in Lidice, Litvínov, and Prague showed that architects were still committed to the format. After 1948, teams of architects under the banner of their regional Stavoprojekt ateliers would participate in nationwide design competitions for projects such as hospitals and administrative buildings (fig. 2.3).

Architektura ČSR became the primary vehicle for sharing these competition entries, since in each case only one project would be selected as the winner and in many cases the buildings were never built. Emphasizing the competition format was also part of a larger effort to institute worker competitions in Czechoslovakia on the Soviet model of the Stakhanovite (*úderník* in Czech, shockworker in English), which involved identifying and rewarding workers who could substantially exceed their target productivity levels in a given task, including the design and production of buildings.⁵⁰ Like their counterparts in industry who would be rewarded for laying more bricks or digging



FIG. 2.4. PHOTO OF MEN GIVING THEIR VOTE OF ASSENT, FROM THE DEDICATION PAGE OF THE FIRST ISSUE OF *ARCHITEKTURA ČSR*, VOLUME 8 (1949).

out more coal, architects would be given a short, fixed period of time to produce a project, and judges would award prizes to the best entries.

THE EIGHT PRINCIPLES

The first issue of *Architektura ČSR* in 1949 included a dedication page with the heading “Czechoslovak Building Works, National Enterprise–Stavoprojekt” and a large photograph showing a room full of smiling men in workers’ clothing, many with their hands raised in overwhelming support of a vote in progress (fig. 2.4). The caption under the photograph read, “Our builder” (*náš stavebník*), a singular noun that evoked a collective ideal in this context. A short dedication followed: “This issue is dedicated to the new objectives of architects in the Five-Year Plan and the work of the Czechoslovak Building Works, National Enterprise–Stavoprojekt. It was put together with the cooperation of all of the employees of Stavoprojekt and expresses the ideas, aspirations, working methods, and results up to this point of those architects, engineers, structural engineers, and technicians who have found

in Stavoprojekt the necessary instrument for the fulfillment of the Five-Year Plan.”⁵¹ This issue of the journal contained a series of articles by the central figures from Stavoprojekt, including Janů, Voženílek, Kroha, and representatives of the research centers. These articles articulated the production goals, operating principles, and research methods of this far-reaching new organization.⁵² Housing was foregrounded in the examples, indicating the central role of this sector in the administration’s mission. The centerpiece of the issue was a thirty-five-page article written by Erich Kohn, director of the Typification and Standardization Institute; Karel Storch, director of the research centers; and Miloslav Wimmer of the Typification and Standardization Institute’s Department of Housing, and it outlined what the authors called the “productive and technical means” to achieve architecture’s “new objectives.”⁵³ The article proposed eight guiding principles for the new building industry: typification, modularization, industrialization, prefabrication, a production plan for building, an interdependence of design and implementation, research, and documentation.

Typification was the establishment of types to reduce the variety and cost of buildings while improving the overall quality of the projects. Modularization, defined as the adoption of a standard building module for elements such as “bricks, masonry blocks, reinforced concrete columns and beams, formwork, sheathing, [and] fixtures” would provide significant economic and time-saving benefits. Industrialization should “economize building, make it faster and more precise in its production, eliminate seasonal building work, better utilize the labor force, equipment, and machinery.”⁵⁴ Prefabrication, the mechanization of work that had previously been done by craftsmen, could improve the quality of building materials, reduce waste, allow for more economically efficient transportation of materials to building sites, and most importantly, allow for work to continue under all weather conditions. A production plan for building was an important principle because “we have two very important factors working against us: the need for apartments and places to work and the need for raw materials for building from the domestic or foreign market.”⁵⁵ Through planning, the available financial and material resources could be utilized to their fullest potential.

The authors stressed the need for the interdependence of design and implementation, which required designers “to be familiar with the constant variability of the situation with materials, production, and labor and not to allow their designs to exceed the given limits and conditions.” In statements reminiscent of Teige and the Architectural Working Group in the 1930s, research was posited as one of the fundamental “theses” of Stavoprojekt and its research centers, which were dedicated to “a new conception of technical work, which will not be based on tradition, on the inertia of accepted knowl-

edge, nor will it be uncritically enthralled by constructivist playthings, but it will be supported by the given reality.”⁵⁶ The final principle was improving the clarity and availability of documentation. This goal had two parts: professional documentation such as “plans, details, and working programs” and architectural literature, “domestic and foreign technical literature and journals . . . available in original form, in translation, photocopies, and for literature that is not available, on microfilm”; every architecture atelier would have its own specialists’ library and microfilm viewer.⁵⁷ The last fifteen pages of the article illustrated new projects from the Department of Housing at the Typification and Standardization Institute, including electrical wiring diagrams, kitchen and bathroom designs, a variation on Karel Janů’s prefabricated living core, and a genealogy of some of the earliest housing prototypes.

These eight principles reinforced Stavoprojekt’s overarching agenda by expressing conceptual guidelines in precise language that connected the ideals of the regime with the everyday practices of architects in the atelier. For example, the discussion of typification opened with a critical reference to the interwar “machine-aesthetic.”⁵⁸ The terms used in the article were very similar to those in Karel Teige’s critique of Le Corbusier’s Mundaneum in 1929: “If we speak about standardization, normalization, typification, and modularization, we do not want to be concerned only with the technical side of building and to create from these processes art for art’s sake. We are not looking for the beauty of these processes, the beauty of the machine, because the beauty is in their utilization.” Like Karel Janů, who tried to deflect criticism about the loss of artistic freedom and individual responsibility that would come with the Stavoprojekt system, these authors argued in strong terms that, by accepting the reduction in choice and variety that would accompany the “transition from handicraft to production,” the overall quality of architecture would improve: “In the building industry, we want to increase the quantity of products and reduce their cost, so that they can be more available everywhere and useful to everyone. Higher quantities, cost reduction, and cheaper goods are possible by selecting more progressive stages of production than come with work done by hand, thus industrialization. Industrialization necessitates a restriction in the kinds of things manufactured and their variety. Following from this, mass production is possible as well as an improvement in the quality of the product, its transfer to a higher stage of technologization.”⁵⁹ They maintained that disappointing previous experiences with large-scale production, such as the industrial workers’ settlement that was used as an illustration in the article, did not indicate the value of typification in the socialist system (fig. 2.5). This would be the first time that the “society as a whole” and the “consumer” would influence the “typification process.”⁶⁰ It was of course the “corporations” that had possessed the upper hand under capitalism.⁶¹



FIG. 2.5. INDUSTRIAL WORKERS' SETTLEMENT PICTURED IN *ARCHITEKTURA ČSR* (1949).

Using the example of clustered cottages in the Czech and Slovak countryside as a historical model for what they called “natural typification” (fig. 2.6), the authors sought to accelerate the process by “artificial” means:

We are initiating an artificial typification process. We do not know the capacity of any type to form the relations of a socialist society. We do not even know the typical methods of production that could be suited for the given material preconditions. We were brought up and we were used to working with the technical circumstances and materials that were required by the relations of a private builder to the working methods of private enterprise. We want and we must find that method of production that could correspond to the new circumstances in the building industry, the new labor force, and the new methods of production.⁶²

In addition to the general modernist tendency to idealize vernacular forms, the reference here can be read as having two sources—a return to 1930s scientific functionalist rhetoric about beauty resulting from function and utility rather than from added ornamentation and the particular tendency in the Czech lands to think of Slovakia as its primitive and romantic hinterland, populated by peasants living in picturesque villages. In this sense, it is no accident that images from Slovakia were chosen over similar scenes from the



FIG. 2.6. CLUSTERED COTTAGES IN SLOVAKIA AS PICTURED IN *ARCHITEKTURA ČSR* (1949).

Czech lands. As models of typification, the cottages, unselfconsciously repeated and unadorned, represented an ideal of standardized, modest dwellings that these architects aspired to in their search for “new methods” for the “new circumstances.”

In the article’s section on modularization, illustrated with examples of modular Swedish masonry, Soviet tenement house plans, and Japanese floor mat diagrams, the authors put forward two potential scales—the module of the plan and the module of construction. Based on the requirements of program and the rationality of the drawing scale, the plan module was determined by the “economy of work or the economy of materials or the economy of spatial arrangements or the variability of the floor plan.”⁶³ In each case, the result was a different ideal scale. Using images from a German book entitled *Das Japanisches Wohnhaus* (1935), a tatami room and a set of floor mat diagrams illustrated the module of the mat, which the authors called a “practical module” for the “basis of Japanese typification” (fig. 2.7).⁶⁴ Like other plan modules, the result was a specific dimension, not the universal scale they desired.

In order to restrict these multiple possibilities, the module of construc-

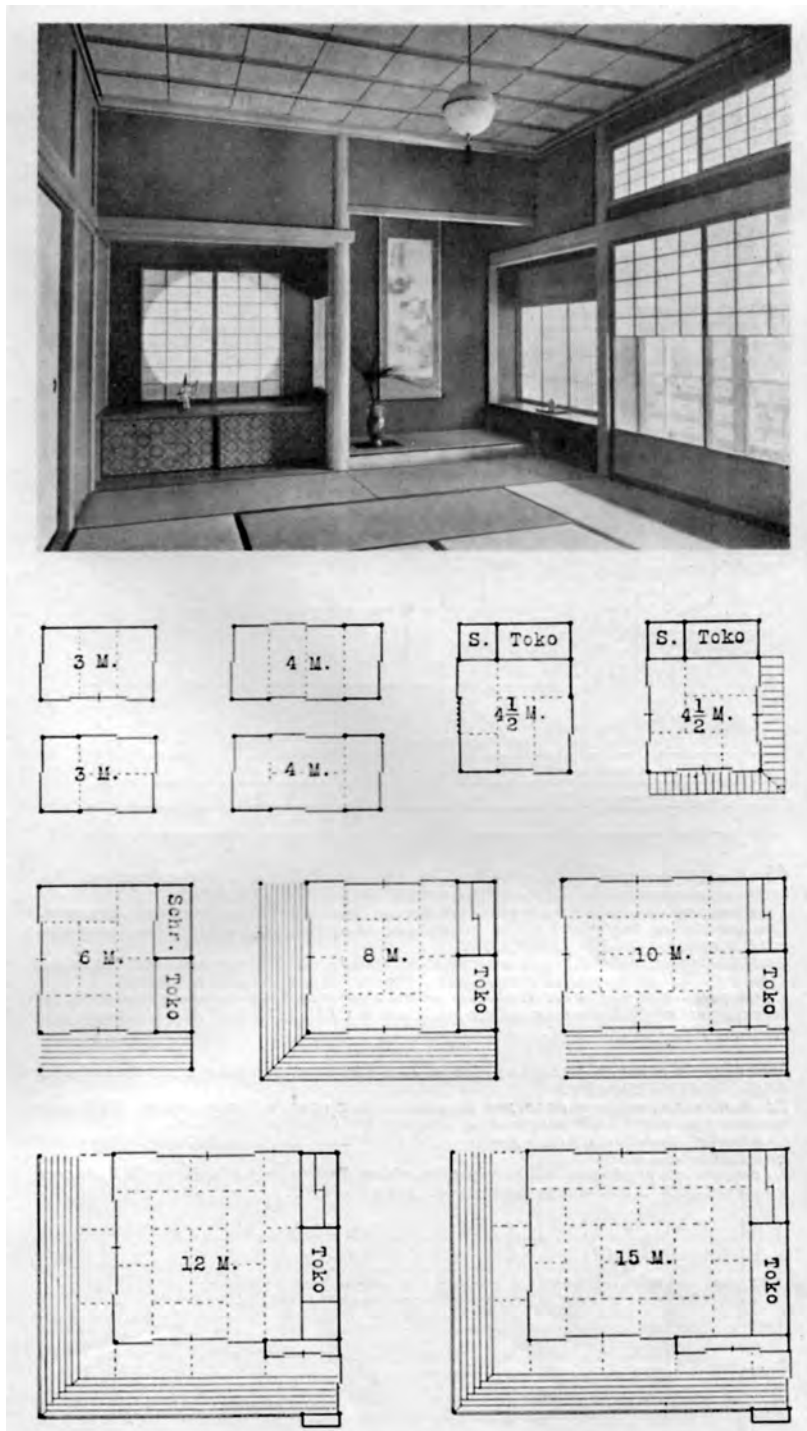


FIG. 2.7. JAPANESE TATAMI ROOM AND MODULES BASED ON THE FLOOR MAT, FROM ARCHITEKTURA ČSR (1949).

tion was proposed as a better option. Unlike the module of the plan, which was based on numeric abstraction and functional assumptions, the module of construction was smaller, more flexible, and more precise. It was determined by the demands of the materials and the necessities of production: “If one considers the module as a specific scale, which sets the degree of choice, it brings one to a certain understood and restricted sequence that has its own regularity. This follows from the fundamental principle of every construction, from the economy of production, materials, construction, and work, from the economy of every building, from the smallest construction scale—from the module of construction.” This approach to the question was not novel. Czechoslovakia had been a part of an international discussion about the benefits of modularization as early as the 1920s. In fact, the Baťa Shoe Company in Moravia had been one of the pioneers in the field. Like their international colleagues, the authors proposed a module of ten centimeters for Stavoprojekt. This decision was determined by a fraction of the most common building element, the thirty-centimeter brick, and similar studies undertaken during war in the Soviet Union, Sweden, France, and the United States, where architects independently arrived at the same size construction module—ten centimeters.⁶⁵

The modularization portion of the article was the only section accompanied by a dissenting opinion. In inserted text entitled “Comments on the Question of Modularization,” Stavoprojekt director Jiří Voženílek argued that the purpose of modularization was to “make it possible to put up buildings in the largest number of variations with minimal acquisition and transportation costs.” For him, concerns about restrictions on function or a desire to express “architectural rules” had no influence on the determination of the module. He objected to what he saw as Kohn, Storch, and Wimmer’s supposition that there was a “basic contradiction between the construction and the plan module.”⁶⁶

Voženílek argued instead that adherence to a well-chosen dimension expanded the opportunity for variation and the ability of the system to adapt to specific programmatic needs: “The dimensions of the fundamental module do not restrict the dimensions of the space in so far as they could substantially influence the course of ordinary functional processes, because a larger number of variants is possible. If we have to decide, for example, on the width of the wall panels for the construction of a prefabricated house, it is not possible to think only about the construction particularities of those panels, but one must also consider the spatial arrangement that results from the specific dimension.” He agreed that as the basic element of construction at the time, the thirty-centimeter brick should remain an important determinant. Starting with a module between ten and fifteen centimeters to account for the size of standard elements such as tiles, he argued that it was, “how-

ever, a mistake to consider 30cm as the basic module. Such a number is only the smallest shared multiple of the basic modules of 10cm and 15cm. Without needing to elaborate further, the dimensions of brick construction show that the smallest increment for using all of the bricks is 15cm.”⁶⁷ With this statement, Voženílek compressed a significant philosophical disagreement about the nature of architectural industrialization into a discussion about centimeters and bricks, bringing the argument from the realm of political idealism to the necessities of architectural practice in a language that was understandable to his audience.

In addition to the implications of this strategy for appealing to architects on their own terms, this exchange was significant for other reasons. As indicated by the four authors’ rejection of any notion of decorative style, architects’ fears that Stavoprojekt would “only mechanically put forward the concepts of functional building methods” rather than “valuing their work as something creative” had already become reality by 1949.⁶⁸ This disagreement about the function of the module, in which three authors suggested that the module was best understood as a construction dimension and Voženílek countered that it was a space-making tool that facilitated construction, proved that the discourse among the leadership had moved beyond any possible engagement with questions of style or form. The only realm left for “creativity” was in the imaginative use of the module, a design restriction that must have felt “mechanical” to many of Stavoprojekt’s architects.

The texts were also a clear indication that there were disagreements within the leadership circles of Stavoprojekt. Rather than printing Voženílek’s essay in place of the section written by Kohn, Storch, and Wimmer, the editors allowed for substantive dialogue on the journal’s pages by juxtaposing the two essays. This was one of many examples in which the top-down image of architecture as being controlled by directives from the Communist Party or by disconnected leaders who answered to the political elite does not fit the reality. There was also a surprising willingness to think independently of the Soviet Union in these comments. In arguing against the logic of his colleagues and the “similar studies” in countries that supported the ten-centimeter module, Voženílek was indicating that the Soviet Union had adopted a flawed building module and that Czechoslovakia should not follow its lead.

This autonomy would not last; by 1950, the relationship to the Soviet Union would change and Czech and Slovak architects would be expected to follow the Soviet model. It is important to recognize, however, that the establishment of Stavoprojekt occurred at a time when Czechoslovakia was looking to international standards of practice in capitalist and socialist countries, as well as to its own history of innovation in the building industry, to determine what its socialist design sector should look like. As this discussion shows, the

Czechoslovak Building Works and Stavoprojekt were not institutional copies of a Soviet model, as historians have assumed, but the first of what would be many local attempts to create a socialist design sector that would facilitate the building of socialism.

THE BAŤA LEGACY

The exchange between Jiří Voženílek and his colleagues is important for another reason—what it communicates about the influence of the Baťa Shoe Company in the formation of the postwar building industry. Voženílek assumed the directorship of Stavoprojekt after leaving his position in the Baťa Building Department in Zlín. The connection to Baťa is essential for understanding the roots of the Czechoslovak Building Works and Stavoprojekt institutional models. Voženílek's experiences in Zlín and familiarity with the “Baťa system” informed many of the ideas that he promoted as director, including his vigorous defense of the module as the basic space-making element for building.

Zlín had a long history of innovative, high-quality design due to the resources of the Baťa family. The city was built almost entirely by the company in a style derived from the industrial aesthetic of its large factory complex.⁶⁹ Tomáš Baťa was a strong supporter of modern architecture. Jan Kotěra, one of the great early Czech modern architects, built a villa for the Baťa family in 1911 and completed a master plan (most of which was never built) for the town in 1918.⁷⁰ In the 1920s and 1930s, the Baťa Company recruited a group of talented young architects to work in its Building Department. František Gahura, a native of Zlín and student of Kotěra and Jože Plečnik in Prague, joined the office in 1923 after his university thesis project was chosen for the new town hall and built that year.⁷¹ Vladimír Karfík, a Czech architect who had worked for Le Corbusier, Holabird & Root, and Frank Lloyd Wright, arrived in 1930.

Taking the lead from his American counterparts in shoe-manufacturing towns such as Endicott and Johnson City in New York State, where Baťa saw new reinforced concrete factory buildings during a visit in 1919, Baťa architects designed Zlín's post-1920 buildings on a standard industrial construction module, in this case, approximately twenty by twenty feet.⁷² Buildings on this module included new factories, dormitories, schools, a department store, hotel, cinema, a memorial to Tomáš Baťa, and a skyscraper headquarters by Karfík (figs. 2.8 and 2.9). Use of this module survived beyond World War II; Jiří Voženílek's own Collective House in Zlín, built between 1947 and 1951, was also based on the twenty-by-twenty module (fig. 2.10). František Gahura spoke about the importance of this “standard”: “The main influence of Zlín's appearance has been the factory building itself. It is the ‘leitmotif’ of Zlín's architecture. It is repeated in numerous variations in all structures, serving



FIG. 2.8. COMMERCIAL ZONE IN ZLÍN IN THE 1930S.

FIG. 2.9. ZLÍN DORMITORY, HOTEL, AND OFFICE BUILDING (FROM FRONT TO BACK) USING THE TWENTY-BY-TWENTY-FOOT CONSTRUCTION MODULE, 2006.

public purposes, schools, dormitories, a community house, a social welfare institute, etc. The architect's imagination had to develop all layouts starting from this structural, industrial standard."⁷³ So in reading Kohn, Storch, and Wimmer's assessment of the dual nature of modularization, Voženílek drew on his experiences from Zlín, where the module was embraced for its economy and flexibility and seen as an integral part of design at every scale.

Baťa's corporate business model was also appropriated in this new context. Baťa was one of the world's largest shoe manufacturers in the 1930s, with offices in Europe, Asia, and North America by 1935. Tomáš Baťa, the company's founder, derived many of his business practices from his extensive knowledge of American manufacturing. His contribution to business history, the "Baťa system," can be described as the simulation of market conditions inside a single corporation.⁷⁴ In the Baťa corporation, 250 autonomous departments interacted with each other as separate units, buying and selling materials from each other at competitive prices, issuing invoices, and opening bidding to outside firms that could try to underbid the in-house department. Employees were compensated for both their own work and the collective work of the unit, which created an incentive to excel and a community atmosphere that proved successful in increasing productivity. The Baťa Building Department, led by Gahura from 1923 to 1934, by Karfík from 1934 to 1946, and by Voženílek from 1946 to 1948, was one of these autonomous units, as were manufacturers of building materials such as concrete and bricks (fig. 2.11).⁷⁵

Although not articulated in this way in the late 1940s, the hierarchy established between the Czechoslovak Building Works and its one hundred constituent enterprises, including Stavoprojekt, resembled Baťa's organization. When Voženílek was brought to Prague to "organize the socialist design sector" on the Zlín model, he had a twofold mandate. First, as the head of the only design office nationalized before



FIG. 2.10. FAÇADE OF THE COLLECTIVE HOUSE IN ZLÍN, C. 1958.



FIG. 2.11. BAŤA BUILDING DEPARTMENT IN ZLÍN, 1940S.

1948, he had the knowledge to integrate the individual culture of the atelier with the collective work ideal of the socialist system. Second, the institutional relationship between the Baťa Building Department and the larger corporation would be replicated in the context of Stavoprojekt and the Czechoslovak Building Works. Voženílek was uniquely qualified to understand this integration at multiple levels of the organization, including the architectural ateliers, the research centers, and the building industry as a whole.⁷⁶

This link between Baťa and Stavoprojekt was not only in the skills or ideas that Voženílek brought to the job; there were real continuities in the institutions. In an agreement between the Czechoslovak Buildings Works and the Baťa Company drafted on March 23, 1948, the Department for Typification and Standardization of Industrial and Residential Buildings (Oddělení pro typisaci a normalisaci průmyslových a bytových staveb) was established in Prague under the direction of the Baťa design office in Zlín, headed at that

time by Jiří Voženílek.⁷⁷ This was only one week after the Action Committee of Czechoslovak Architects began its work and six months before a clear plan emerged for the nationalization of architectural practice. As Otakar Nový would later argue, this joint venture, which would last until September, was the kernel of Stavoprojekt itself.⁷⁸ There were also building research initiatives within Baťa that would later be transferred to Stavoprojekt, including the unit focused on prefabricated housing. This again illustrates the local roots of Stavoprojekt in its dependence on knowledge, personnel, and infrastructure inherited from Baťa and its unique form of capitalist production.

THE MODEL HOUSING DEVELOPMENTS AFTER 1948

From its inception, Stavoprojekt's architecture ateliers and research centers were charged with developing a series of housing types that could alleviate the housing shortage as quickly and cheaply as possible, while retaining an acceptable level of architectural quality and modern conveniences. With an experienced administration, a working agenda, and defined strategies to successfully fulfill the goals of the First Five-Year Plan, Stavoprojekt began its work in earnest in early 1949. One of its earliest tasks was to finish the units at the still incomplete Model Housing Developments in Kladno, Most, and Ostrava and to reconsider the plans for further stages of construction.

The Model Housing Development in Ostrava had been planned as a large complex with apartment houses, schools, and a town square offering a department store, house of culture, health clinic, post office, butcher, and grocery store. By 1948, only fifteen apartment blocks out of the more than seventy that had been included in the original master plan were under construction, and work had not begun on any of the civic buildings.⁷⁹ Each association faced similar problems, and the early phases of all three Model Housing Developments would be under construction for at least a decade.⁸⁰ Although the process for financing and delivering the projects had to adjust to the new system, the fundamental mandate of the three associations—to build modest, comfortable housing units for workers in key industries—did not change.

This variance between the original mandate and the new building process created a conflict between the associations and the Czechoslovak Building Works. Since the Model Housing Development units were designed during the Two-Year Plan to individual specifications and budgets, they did not fall within the guidelines being set for new standardized housing construction; instead, they were grouped under the label “atypical” by the Ministry of Technology and the Education and Typification Institute (Studijní a typisační ústav), the new name for the Typification and Standardization Institute.⁸¹ In a memo to the association building the Model Housing Development in Ostrava in September 1949, the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs, which had

administered the Model Housing Development program from its inception, emphasized the need to work only with standardized types:

An announcement on September 14, 1949, from the Ministry of Technology about types of residential buildings specified that for now six types are obligatory, that is, they must be used for the design and implementation of all new apartment buildings! The types were drawn up by Stavoprojekt's Education and Typification Institute in Prague. In the event that your Association will have new apartment buildings in the plan executed in 1950, you are not allowed to implement them according to the projects you have already completed, but only according to the announced obligatory types. Apartment buildings given building permission before this announcement took effect, whose implementation has not already started, can only be carried forward according to the approved plans with permission from the Ministry of Technology.⁸²

Compounding the problem were budget overruns. When the program failed to deliver the promised units by 1948, budget forecasts for the completion of the project increased and additional materials were hard to come by for projects that had not been anticipated in the First Five-Year Plan.

Frustration over these issues was evident in the discussions at association gatherings in each city. For example, at a committee meeting of the Association for the Construction of the Model Housing Development in Kladno on December 22, 1949, tempers flared as representatives from the Czechoslovak Building Works, local enterprises, and the ministries argued over where to place blame for the failure to produce more units. It came out during the meeting that the Czechoslovak Building Works had published newspaper articles claiming that 110 percent of the plan for the housing settlement had been fulfilled, even though the association knew that the correct figure was 53 percent—126 units as of December 22. A local engineer working on the project expressed his disgust that representatives of the Czechoslovak Building Works had even been invited to the meeting. He remarked, "Based on the quality of the employees, how things progressed over at the housing development, it is understandable that the Czechoslovak Building Works's plan was not fulfilled, but why was the public informed so incorrectly, when it is easy to see if the plan was fulfilled[?] The Czechoslovak Building Works sent us a letter in which they pointed out that if we didn't sign a binding agreement with them, we wouldn't have the legal or moral legitimacy to challenge them on their obligations." There were complaints that costs would have been lower if local craftsmen had been employed to do the work. A representative of the Czechoslovak Building Works replied that the association in Kladno "did not have a positive view of national enterprises; they didn't even pay their invoices properly." The same engineer replied that "the national enterprise used deceptive tricks to steal money." The discussion eventually returned to

the question of the housing units. An engineer from the Czechoslovak Building Works reminded his colleagues that the demands for fulfilling the plan would increase in 1950: “in Ostrava, they should have built 6,000 homes by 1950—how should they do this if at this point they can’t even finish 300?”⁸³

Similar concerns were voiced at meeting of the building association in Ostrava, where the political pressure to deliver units was even more intense. Common complaints included a lack of building materials and a shortage of labor.⁸⁴ The association sent repeated requests to the Czechoslovak Building Works for assistance, but the projects remained behind schedule and over budget.⁸⁵ By 1950, the level of frustration with the poor management hit a fever pitch. Three years into the project, many housing blocks lacked basic necessities like central heating and proper attic insulation and lighting. According to one resident, “The electrical work is very negligent. It is not only that many already-occupied apartments don’t have enough fixtures, it’s that the occupants cannot get light in all of the shared spaces; mainly there are no fixtures in any of the stairways or basement. Practically the whole housing development, with the exception of the apartments, is completely unlit in the evening and at night.”⁸⁶ Under these less-than-ideal conditions, the Model Housing Developments were a constant reminder of the failure of the Two-Year Plan and the challenge to make improvements as quickly as possible in order to keep up with the planning targets.

THE T-SERIES

In establishing Stavoprojekt as an integrated unit of the Czechoslovak Building Works connected to its material distribution network and industrial processes, the political and architectural leadership hoped to avoid the pitfalls that had derailed the Model Housing Development program. During the first two years of Stavoprojekt, the primary agenda of the Education and Typification Institute and its Department of Housing was the restriction of potential designs to a limited number of types, which became known as typification. The product of these initial investigations was the T-series, which consisted of six housing types proposed for use in all residential projects across the country by 1950; the number of types would increase to eight in 1951. Given what had been learned from the Two-Year Plan projects, this was a logical next step in the process of industrialization if the building sector wanted to fulfill its planning quotas. As the *Architektura ČSR* essay by Kohn, Storch, and Wimmer indicated, the consensus among technocrats in the administration was that only the reduction of choice would lead to success in this regard; creative concerns had to be sacrificed to this larger goal, at least for the moment.

Czechoslovakia’s confidence in typification was unrivaled in Europe. A

TYPY DOMŮ	SSSR	POLSKO	MAĎARSKO	DÁN SKO	ŠVÉDSKO	NORSKO	ŠVÝCARSKO	HOLANDSKO	FINSKO	ČSR	
VĚŽOVÝ											
POČ. BYTŮ NA SKLOD.		6	6	6	6-10	3-5	10			6	
MATERIÁL		1a	1a	1a	1a c	1a	1a			c	
ORIENTACE		□		□	□	□	□			□	
BODOVÝ											
POČ. BYTŮ NA SKLOD.	6	6	3-4		3-4	3					
MATERIÁL	c	c	c		c						
ORIENTACE	2	□	2		□	Y					
ŘÁDOVÝ											
POČ. BYTŮ NA SKLOD.	1-5	2-3	2-4	2(3)	2	3-4	2-4	1	2	2	
MATERIÁL	c	c	c	c	c	c	(1a) c	c	c	c	
ORIENTACE	□	□	2	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	
PAVLÁČOVÝ											
POČ. BYTŮ NA SKLOD.		2-4	6				4-6	2			
MATERIÁL		c	c				c	c			
ORIENTACE		□	2				□	2			

FIG. 2.12. CHART FROM *ARCHITEKTURA ČSR* (1950) SHOWING HOUSING TYPES BEING CONSTRUCTED IN VARIOUS EUROPEAN COUNTRIES. THE DOTTED LINES REPRESENT TYPES THAT ARE LESS COMMON; SOLID LINES REPRESENT THE MOST COMMON.

chart published in *Architektura ČSR* in 1950 showed that within a group that included Poland, Hungary, the Soviet Union, Denmark, Sweden, Norway, and Switzerland, Czechoslovakia was working with the fewest number of housing types for both family houses and apartment buildings (fig. 2.12). For example, Sweden had five commonly used apartment building footprints, Poland had three, and Czechoslovakia, only one. Although many architects within Stavo-projekt would soon see this as a negative aspect of their work, it was promoted at the time as a sign of progress and the success of Czechoslovakia's transformation “from handicraft to production.”

The move toward standardized types had begun as early as July 1948, when the Ministry of Technology convened a working committee to decide what the floor area of new housing units should be. They began with the “basic Two-Year Plan apartment,” defined in this case as a unit with 90 square meters (970 square feet) of living space. An internal competition was held to gener-

ate proposals for an apartment that would include a living room, two bedrooms, a “working” kitchen, pantry, bathroom, and WC (fig. 2.13).⁸⁷ The resulting units were similar to those in Anna Friedlová’s buildings in the Ostrava Model Housing Development and the Scandinavian “differentiated apartments” promoted by Karel Storch, who had become director of the Stavoprojekt research institutes, although these units had no outdoor spaces.⁸⁸ When competition entries by Jiří Štursa and Otto Slabý were published the following year in *Architektura ČSR*, the designs, which did not adhere to a two-bay structural system or a shared plumbing wall between the kitchen and bathroom, were criticized for their “disregard for the principles of economic arrangement and construction and the liberal directives of the Ministry of Technology that threatened the fulfillment of the plan for housing.”⁸⁹ This criticism reflected the shift toward economization and typification already under way by that time.

Given the immediate need for housing and the continuing shortage of building materials and skilled labor, the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs instructed the working committee to proceed with the initial assumption that in order to fulfill their quotas, the area of a standard unit should be reduced by 40 percent, to 53 square meters (570 square feet).⁹⁰ The committee set some parameters for their proposals. First, the per-square-meter cost of the new living area should remain the same as that of the “basic Two-Year Plan apartment.” Second, any reduction in costs would have to result from an equal reduction in space and amenities. Neither a large apartment with few amenities nor a small apartment with more amenities was desirable. The committee members vowed instead to find an acceptable compromise between the two.⁹¹

Their suggestions included consolidating one of the bedrooms with the living room and enlarging the working kitchen to include a dining area; combining the living room with the working kitchen and keeping the two private bedrooms; using the space allotted for an entry hall as the dining room; and creating

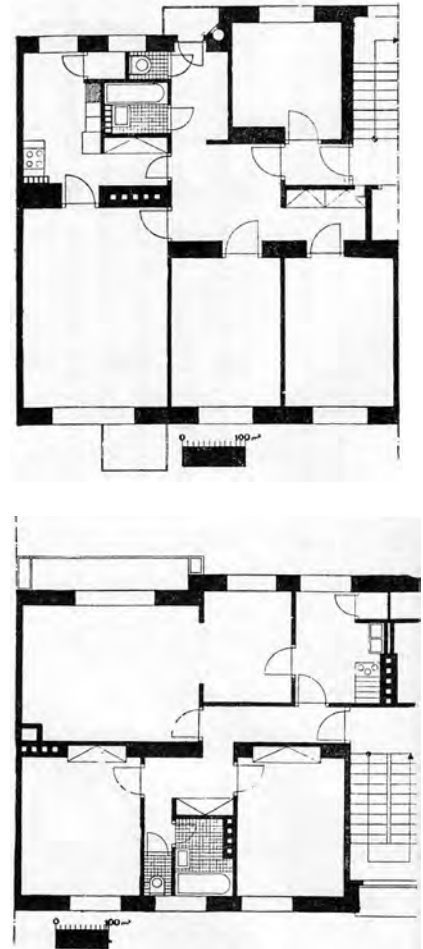


FIG. 2.13. JIŘÍ ŠTURSA AND OTTO SLABÝ, PLANS OF TWO-YEAR PLAN APARTMENTS.

a new apartment type called the double studio, with two larger private bedrooms and a small shared kitchen nook, bathroom, and WC. This last suggestion was intended for two couples without children, two retired couples, or two single parents with one child each. In keeping with the scale of the Two-Year Plan apartment buildings, the optimal size for an apartment house was envisioned to be six units per floor accessed by three entry stairs, with two apartments per landing. Despite the budget problems, the goals of the Two-Year Plan units would remain: separate sleeping spaces for parents and children; adequate sunshine and fresh air; and the simplification of women's domestic duties. The final designs for the T-series units would incorporate many of these initial recommendations.⁹²

Work on standardized units was already in progress during the summer of 1948 at the Department of Typification and Standardization of Industrial and Residential Buildings, the joint venture between the Baťa Corporation and the Czechoslovak Building Works that would become part of Stavo-projekt.⁹³ The decision was made at this early stage to pursue both standardized units in apartment buildings and single-family houses, although a preference for the apartment types was already emerging. An advisory committee on population growth at the Office of the Prime Minister (Úřad předsednictva vlády) examined this issue in detail in a report entitled "Collective Living or the Single-Family House?" submitted for review in September 1948.⁹⁴

According to the report's author, V. Dorazil, collective living offered one primary benefit: a lower per-unit cost. With shared public spaces, an equivalent amount of space and amenities could be achieved in apartment units at 65 percent of the cost of a single-family house. However, with reference to the example of the Netherlands, which had a high concentration of urban homes, living in a single-family house was determined to be preferable to collective living in every other category. The house offered better hygienic conditions, space for children "to move about unsupervised... unthreatened by the motion on city streets," more quality family time together, rent-free living after retirement, and a stronger defense against military attacks, a reminder of the cultural context of the early cold war.⁹⁵ The single-family house also allowed "builders to participate in the building work on their own homes," because an important part of the program would be to allow workers to construct the houses "on their own time."⁹⁶ It was calculated that this would free up as much as 20 percent of the construction work force for other projects.

As part of the committee's work on the issue of population growth, family size was also addressed in the report. Large families were promoted based on the conclusion that "for population growth in the country, it is necessary for each family to raise more than three children." The report argued that if women were to be expected to have four or more children, it was "foolish-

ness” to expect them to raise such a large family in an apartment while at the same time holding down a full-time job and saving money for the needs of the family. According to Dorazil, women who were surveyed for the report expressed the opinion that if they were to have large families and jobs, it was imperative that they live in a single-family house. He stated, however, that for this to happen,

a family has to reach the point financially that a woman could have the desired number of children immediately after getting married and, if the family has to struggle through a miscarriage, another such pause would not be an obstacle to further financial development. It is necessary to offer women some possibility, if need be, to contribute with her own activities to the economic well-being of her family and in these terms, her continued presence at the family hearth. This possibility is only provided to women on a large scale through a properly equipped single-family house. The possibility of having this house is ensured by getting married. Only a house can usher a woman back again to the duty that she has been assigned as the pivot around which the economic well-being of her family turns and a gleeful flock of rosy-cheeked children dances.

Taking all of the arguments together, the author concluded that “we can, therefore, only reasonably solve our housing problem with the consistent and all-around preference for the well-furnished single-family house.”⁹⁷

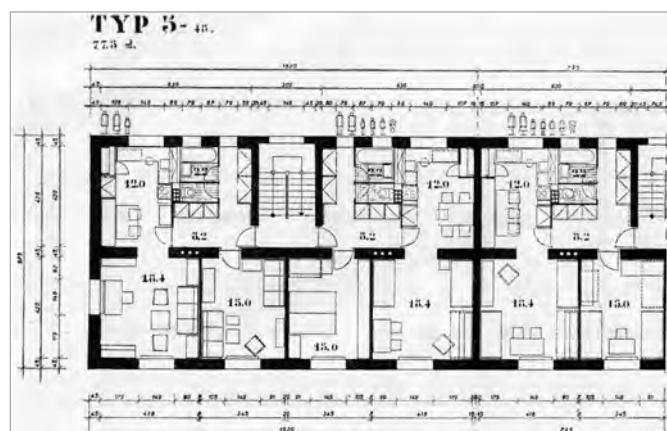
In a letter that showed the extent to which pure economics determined the architectural agenda at the time, the Ministry of Technology responded to the report with skepticism. Agreeing that “it is well-known that there is an appetite among a certain number of residents for their own single-family house, there are however, contrary to this, irrefutable benefits to collective living, mainly in so far as concerns community amenities [and] the relatively low cost of operation and construction.” Existing housing developments that contained both single-family houses and apartment blocks were cited as models for future development rather than the “all-around preference” for the single-family house. The letter cited a number of economic arguments for collective living not addressed in the report, for example, a reduction in the costs of transporting workers to outlying work sites; a decrease in lost time, tiredness, and poor productivity associated with long daily commutes to work; and cheaper costs for infrastructure such as water mains. The response also called into question some of the report’s social conclusions: “It seems that the positives for population growth from living in single-family houses are more likely due to how the people live in the houses, that is, their moral competencies and appetite for family and not the house at all.” In the end, the recommendation was based solely on economic constraints. The question of whether or not the single-family house was better for the population was of no consequence. It concluded,

According to the imminent demands and wishes of the builders, which average about 2:1 [in favor of apartments], it is necessary to plan for the same quota of units in apartment buildings and single-family homes that was put forward in our first proposal for units during the Five-Year Plan. Unfortunately, the well-known material situation—the need to conserve building materials and increase the number of units and the reshuffling in the wake of the economic rebuilding of the state—is temporarily forcing the requested quota of units in single-family houses to be kept down to an average of probably 3:1.⁹⁸

These “temporary” circumstances would continue, and, by 1951, the single-family house was only recommended “when settlements are scattered or when, for technical reasons, it is not possible to design higher buildings.”⁹⁹

This decision to pursue apartment buildings and single-family homes in a 3-to-1 ratio was made the same month that Stavoprojekt was established, setting a clear mandate for the new organization. In its first few months, Stavoprojekt continued the work started at the joint Baťa–Czechoslovak Building Works venture of defining a limited number of housing types.¹⁰⁰ The T-series plans, including five apartment types (T1–T5), first appeared in the article by Kohn, Storch, and Wimmer in early 1949 (figs. 2.14–2.16).¹⁰¹ These three- to four-story brick apartment buildings conformed to a rectangular footprint with a single, repeated apartment layout mirrored around three sets of entry stairs. This plan created three identical and six total units on each floor, just as suggested by the working committee at the Ministry of Technology the previous summer and similar to the apartment buildings at the Model Housing Developments in Kladno, Most, and Ostrava. In addition to three or four rooms, each floor-through unit had a separate kitchen, pantry, bathroom, and WC. The 40 percent reduction in floor area that the Ministry of Technology had requested was not evident in these early types; the floor areas ranged from the T5’s 78 square meters (840 square feet) to the T4’s 100 square meters (1,080 square feet). The average among the five was in line with the Two-Year Plan type at around 90 square meters (970 square feet). Interior layouts varied in terms of the location of various rooms but stayed within a basic two-bay square footprint.¹⁰²

As recommended by the working committee, adjustments were made in the kitchen and dining areas in each type to achieve some spatial and programmatic variation; for example, the T1 and T3 units had small, boxy “working” kitchens, while the T3 had a larger galley kitchen, the T4 had a “working” kitchen with a separate dining room, and the T5 had an eat-in kitchen (figs. 2.17 and 2.18). In each case, the apartments had an entry hall, a space defined as the living room, a private bedroom for the parents, a separate sleeping space for the children, a pantry, and numerous closets. The basic unit of each type was adapted for varied family sizes with built-in and con-



FIGS. 2.14, 2.15, 2.16. PLANS FOR THE T-SERIES T1, T4, T5 TYPES, WITH GRAPHIC REPRESENTATIONS OF ADULTS AND CHILDREN ACCOMPANYING EACH FLOOR PLAN.

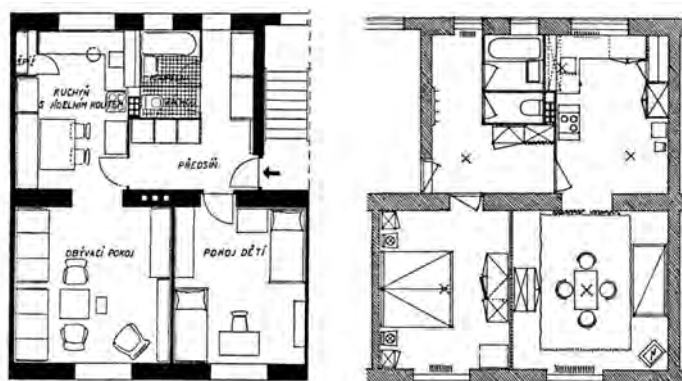


FIG. 2.17. BUILDINGS CONTAINING T1 TYPE UNITS IN THE PROSEK NEIGHBORHOOD OF PRAGUE.

FIG. 2.18. APARTMENT PLAN FOR THE T5 TYPE IN PROSEK, AS PLANNED ON THE LEFT AND AS BUILT ON THE RIGHT.

vertible furniture. Once again, the principles of the Scandinavian “differentiated” apartment were evident.

The units were also designed to accommodate the larger families the government was promoting; the plans show families as small as three persons, with an average of six, and as many as eleven (the family size can be seen in the graphic illustration of adults and children on the plans). Therefore, as proposed, the overall living space was cramped, with all of the rooms and sofas being converted to sleeping spaces at night. Although the apartments



FIG. 2.19. INTERIOR OF A T5 TYPE UNIT IN THE PROSEK NEIGHBORHOOD OF PRAGUE.

followed perceived international standards, the expected density of people in the Czechoslovak units exceeded those in Northern and Western European countries. As images of a prototype unit show, the apartments were modest with boxy rooms, but bright and comfortable (fig. 2.19). With the exception of a group of T1 and T5 blocks built in the Prosek neighborhood of Prague in 1948–1949, the first proposals remained on paper. Research on the types continued, however, at the Stavoprojekt research centers.

The Department of Housing at the Typification and Standardization Institute took the lead in these investigations, and by May 1949, staff had presented a codified T-series to the Ministry of Technology for implementation the following year.¹⁰³ Three apartment types and three single-family houses were proposed for use in all residential projects; by the end of 1950, two additional types would be added: a variation on one of the houses and a building with two-room studio or “bachelor” apartments. The house types were the T40D and T40E, small single-family houses; the T42, a two-family house or duplex; and the T51, a row house. They were modest accommodations, ranging in size from the 47-square-meter (510-square-foot) T40 house to the 67-square-meter (720-square-foot) T42 duplex units and the 88-square-meter (950-square-foot) T51 two-story row houses (figs. 2.20 and 2.21).

As shown in a 1958 photograph, the T42 duplexes, with their simple decorative schemes, tightly spaced sites, and pitched roofs, successfully recalled the vernacular cottages that had been praised in *Architektura ČSR* as examples of “natural typification” (fig. 2.22). The T40 types were problematic and

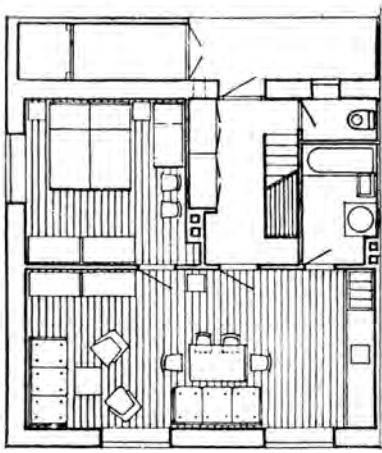


FIG. 2.20. T42 DUPLEX PLAN, 1950.

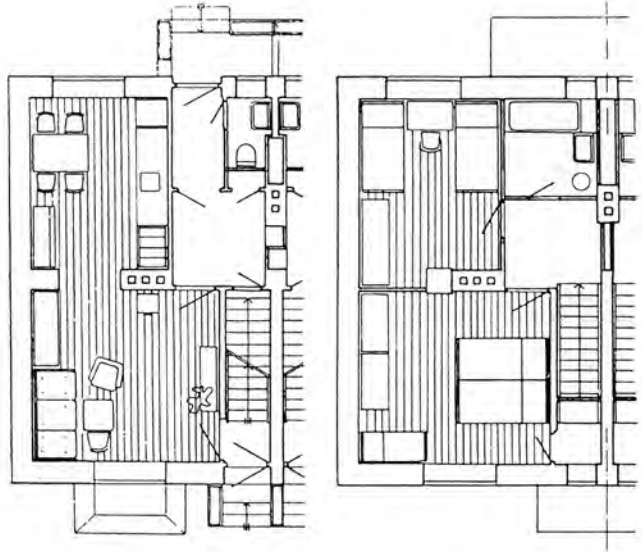


FIG. 2.21. T51 TWO-STORY ROW HOUSE PLAN, 1950.

unpopular because of their small size, lack of privacy, and few amenities; unlike the other types, these small houses used stove heating and dry toilets.¹⁰⁴ Initially, the T40 was designed to allow for the construction of additional living space in the attic, potentially almost doubling the floor area. In the absence of available building materials, however, this sort of expansion proved impossible. Due to these concerns, no T40 units were planned for Slovakia in 1951, where they had accounted for half of all new housing units in 1950. The T42 duplexes were more popular, constituting 18.5 percent of new units in 1950 and 20 percent in 1951.¹⁰⁵

The T-series apartment buildings were simple and unadorned, with traditional pitched roofs, stucco façades, and boxy proportions. They lacked many of the elegant details of the Two-Year Plan projects, such as the winter gardens in Anna Friedlová's Ostrava buildings or the balcony spaces at the Collective House in Litvínov. There were also no formal flourishes such as the stepped siting of Vladimír Karfík's brick buildings in Zlín or the bold entry portico in Litvínov. The utilitarian T-series types included the T11 and T12, three- or four-story rectangular blocks with three front entry stairs; the T20, a rectangular block with studio apartments, double-loaded corridors and entry stairs at each end; and the T60, a tower with five to seven stories (fig. 2.23). Unlike the units in the first iteration of the T-series, the T1–T5 blocks, these apartments were significantly smaller than the Two-Year Plan units. This



FIG. 2.22. S. SKAŘUPA, T42 TYPE DUPLEXES IN ISTEbnÁ, 1954.

FIG. 2.23. T60 PLAN, 1950.



FIG. 2.24. T11 PLAN, 1950.

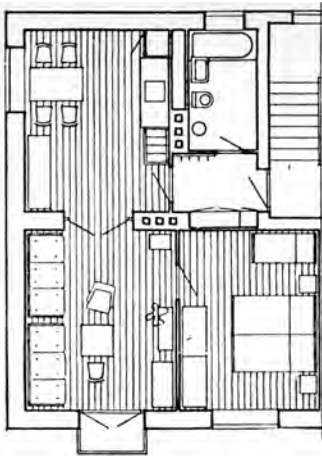


FIG. 2.25. T12 PLAN, 1950.



FIG. 2.26. T12 LIVING ROOM, 1950.

reflected problems with the procurement of building materials and labor, shortages that had been anticipated by the ministries the year before.

Despite the obstacles, all of the apartments in the T-series buildings had their own bathrooms, WC, and kitchens; hot water; local or central heating; and windows on two façades to encourage air circulation and provide ample sunlight. Each building had storage space in the basement and rooms for washing and drying clothes. The possibility of the “double-studio” apartment that appeared in early discussions was never incorporated into the final designs. As feared, the reduction in square meters did mean that the units were less comfortable, with fewer rooms and amenities; for example, instead of “working” kitchens, each of the final designs had only a kitchen nook combined with a dining area and no pantry.

The largest of the three apartment building designs, the T11, included units with a kitchen and dining area, two bedrooms, a living room, and a bathroom, for a total of 86 square meters (930 square feet) (fig. 2.24).¹⁰⁶ Up to six people would be expected to live in this apartment, however, so it was still not ideal or even comfortable; only a few dozen were built. The units in the more common T12 buildings were for families of up to five people.¹⁰⁷ These apartments were even smaller, with a combined kitchen and dining area, a living room with convertible couches for children to sleep on, one bedroom, and a bathroom, all in 65 square meters (700 square feet) (fig. 2.25).¹⁰⁸ In order to reduce costs and simplify the construction process, the T11 and T12 types conformed to a two-bay construction system, creating boxy rooms and almost square floor plans (fig. 2.26).¹⁰⁹ The Ministry of Technology also recommended that the apartment buildings be built in ensembles (figs. 2.27 and 2.28). Although this arrangement contributed to a neighborhood atmosphere and created the possibility for green space in between, the primary reasoning behind it was to “concentrate [building activity] at a minimal number of construction sites,” thereby reducing costs.¹¹⁰



FIG. 2.27. J. FÁRA, HOUSING DEVELOPMENT WITH T11 BUILDINGS, OLMOUC, 1951–1953.

FIG. 2.28. J. DANĚK AND O. POŘÍŠKA, HOUSING DEVELOPMENT WITH T20 BUILDINGS, BLANSKO, 1950–1951.



FIG. 2.29. LIVING CONDITIONS FOR MINERS' FAMILIES, AS SHOWN IN *ARCHITEKTURA ČSR* (1949).

Even with the reduction in floor area and amenities, the T-series represented progress, especially in industrial areas, where the new apartments provided many residents with a substantial improvement in their standard of living and quality of life. In Ostrava, for example, mining families in the region had been living in temporary workers' colonies without indoor plumbing or modern heating. In 1949, *Architektura ČSR* published an article that underscored the need to improve poor housing, "the legacy of capitalism," along with a photograph of dirty, shoeless children captioned, "This is the way the miners' families live" (fig. 2.29).¹¹¹ In the 1954 book entitled *Ostravsko včera a dnes* (The Ostrava Region Yesterday and Today), an image of a dilapidated miner's cottage from the interwar period was juxtaposed with a view of decorative details on a new apartment building in the neighborhood of Šenov-Bludovice, which became part of the new town of Havířov (Miners' Town) the following year (fig. 2.30).¹¹² The construction of the Poruba neighborhood was also advertised as the creation of a beautiful place for miners to live, since they spent "all day digging out coal without a ray of sunshine" and they should thus "have enough sunlight in the hours that they have for a little bit of rest" (figs. 2.31–2.33).¹¹³

Starting in 1950, T-series housing units were being built across the country; by the end of the year, almost seventeen thousand units were under construction—sixty-five hundred apartments, with the remainder being small cottages, usually built in mining colonies.¹¹⁴ This output represented more than 90 percent of all residential construction; only 8 percent of new units in 1950 were classified as "atypical."¹¹⁵ Housing was the most successful sector in this regard, since only 8 percent of all other new buildings were "typified" in 1950, with a goal of 25 percent by 1953.¹¹⁶ This record can be compared favorably, however, to that of the Soviet Union, where Nikita Khrushchev claimed that, from 1951 to 1953, only 1 percent of all construction in the country was done according to standardized types.¹¹⁷ In 1951, the Education and Typification



FIG. 2.30. COMPARATIVE PHOTOGRAPHS FROM *OSTRAVSKO VČERA A DNES* (1954) SHOWING CONDITIONS FOR MINERS IN THE INTERWAR PERIOD (LEFT) AND NEW HOUSING (RIGHT).

FIG. 2.31. LENIN STREET UNDER CONSTRUCTION, OSTRAVA-PORUBA, C. 1954.

FIG. 2.32. THE EMBANKMENT, OSTRAVA-PORUBA, C. 1954.



FIG. 2.33. FIRST AND SECOND DISTRICTS, OSTRAVA-PORUBA, C. 1958.

Institute began publishing a series of technical manuals, *Typisáční sborníky* (Typification Guides), for new building types in housing, as well as in agriculture, industry, and engineering. They were distributed to all Stavoprojekt offices to guarantee that the new guidelines and standards were being followed nationwide.¹¹⁸ As a sign of the acceptance of the T-series, the guide for housing was awarded second prize in the 1951 rankings of the best architecture and construction projects by the editorial board of *Architektura ČSR*.¹¹⁹

The success of the T-series was rooted in its innovative and all-encompassing approach to the standardization process itself, from construction documentation to the fabrication of materials and on-site assembly. The process from design to construction was completed through a series of coordinated steps that relied on a standard building module and mass-produced elements such as bricks, reinforced concrete columns, window assemblies, and interchangeable fixtures and appliances. In comparing the floor plan of a Two-Year Plan unit to the T11 unit, the simplification of the layout is clear in the two-bay system, the centralization of the plumbing wall, and the use of built-in furniture to economize on space. Although these apartments were modest for large families, they offered basic conveniences to a population faced with a severe shortage of housing. The imposition of socialist realism in the early 1950s briefly threatened this utilitarian approach, but, in hindsight, it appears to have had no lasting effect on architectural practice. The first Stavoprojekt vision of socialist design remained at the heart of architectural practice and the building sector until the end of the Communist era.

3 • NATIONAL IN FORM, SOCIALIST IN CONTENT

Sorela and Architectural Imagery

Through five years of war and the years of stagnation and crisis that followed, it was huddled up and metamorphosizing inside a cocoon from which emerged the colorful butterfly of a new art. Do we want to give it a name? Well—it's socialist realism, and it's Czechoslovak. Karel Honzík on the Slavic Agricultural Exhibition, 1948

Czech and Slovak architects were slow to accept the changing cultural climate of the late 1940s. In the first years of Communist rule, designers were brought into a state-run system of architecture and engineering offices with a mandate to standardize the design and delivery of buildings through the widespread implementation of industrial methods. The architectural leadership remained committed to modern forms and used their political credentials to protect the profession from the encroachment of Soviet-style socialist realism. By early 1950, however, the political elite were growing restless as the Soviets put more pressure on them to conform to expectations. Strict adherence to the “Soviet model” of cultural production soon became a necessity, and organizational changes were needed at Stavoprojekt. Karel Janů and Jiří Voženilek were removed from their posts, and discussions of socialist realism began to dominate in the press, the universities, and the Stavoprojekt regional offices.

With this transition, the optimism of the first two years of Communist rule began to fade and architects reluctantly entered into the second phase of socialist architecture, socialist realism. Interwar modernist Josef Havlíček,

then head of the Prague Stavoprojekt office, captured the sense of widespread discontent among architects when he coined the pejorative nickname “Sorela” for the new style.¹ There are two stories about the origin of the name. One suggests that it is a reference to a brand of pomade or shoe polish popular in the interwar years, and the other considers it a combination of SOciálistický – REalismus – LAkomý (Socialist – Realism – Lakomý).² Party loyalist Zdeněk Lakomý was the head of a new Stavoprojekt research initiative established to integrate socialist realist methods and theories into the work of the regional offices.³ Despite the unconfirmed origin of the term, the meaning of Sorela was clear at the time, as expressed recently by architect Jaroslav Sedlecký: “‘Sorela’—a slang term, coined as a conversational shorthand for the phrase ‘socialist realism,’ was originally used only among architects and artists and had such a strong charge of negative value about it that it was kept private—it was a little like a swear word.” With the end of socialist realism and changes in the political climate, the term Sorela eventually became the common name for the architecture of this period.⁴

Unlike in the Soviet Union, where socialist realism dominated the architectural culture for more than twenty years, Sorela had a short shelf life among Czech and Slovak architects. Its main protagonists were architects seeking personal success in the new system; some were recent university graduates looking to put their academic training to use and others were safeguarding their professional positions in an increasingly turbulent political environment. For a few architects, the support was expressed in idealistic terms, although some historians have argued that even those architects committed to the socialist cause acted with the same self-preservationist motives and questionable moral intentions as their more pragmatic counterparts.⁵

In late 1954, the artificiality of the community’s support was evident when many Czech and Slovak architects abandoned Sorela at the first signs of reform in the Soviet Union. Those who chose to continue working in the style fell out of favor. Within a few months, Stavoprojekt’s founding agenda of industrialization and standardization resurfaced as the primary component of a post-Stalinist vision of socialist architecture. This immediate reversal was possible in Czechoslovakia because the technocratic vision at the heart of Stavoprojekt’s first years was never undermined. Research and experimentation continued unabated, especially within a new group of research institutes organized in 1951 with the help of outgoing director Jiří Voženílek and supported, albeit secretly at first, by the highest levels of government.⁶ There was also specificity to the situation in Czechoslovakia when compared to some of its regional neighbors, since the memory of interwar practice and the commitment to a scientific understanding of architecture were never completely lost.

A local architectural discourse on socialist realism and Sorela emerged

in 1948 and disappeared in early 1955. The method initially failed to appeal to most local architects. The new Stavoprojekt leadership had to be tactical to gain reluctant support for it by 1950. Starting that year, architects faced closer scrutiny from the increasingly dogmatic regime and sensed the growing presence of Marxist-Leninist rhetoric in architectural discourse, which reflected a shifting political climate. In the early 1950s, a virulent campaign was under way to purge “class enemies” from the party, and it led to mass arrests, the establishment of forced labor camps, and infamous show trials.⁷ In this uneasy environment, Stavoprojekt and its design architects began to produce high-profile Sorela projects intended to please the regime and bring Czechoslovakia’s public image more in line with the vision of socialist culture promoted in the Soviet Union. Housing was at the center of these debates, due to the continuing crisis in industrial areas and the need to pacify an increasingly wary public whose support for the Communist Party was fading.

The most complete exploration of Sorela was the 1951 design for Nová Ostrava (New Ostrava) near the steel and mining city of Ostrava in northeastern Moravia. The master plan, by a team from the city’s Stavoprojekt office, proposed housing and services for 150,000 residents on land eight kilometers from the historic city center.⁸ The new urban settlement was imagined as a productive landscape, a space of leisure dialectically opposed to Ostrava’s spaces of work. This framework extended the rhetoric of the workers’ revolution and the “overturning” of the bourgeois class into the realm of domesticity and relaxation. At least on the surface, the buildings proposed for Nová Ostrava looked more like aristocratic palaces than the shabby mining settlements of the capitalist era. As built, however, Nová Ostrava, which became the neighborhood of Poruba, represented the most successful Czechoslovak response to socialist realism, with its wide boulevards, abundant green spaces, and monumental, yet humane, building scale (fig. 3.1).

A HISTORIOGRAPHY OF SOCIALIST REALISM

The case of Czechoslovakia provides an opportunity to examine broader questions about socialist realism as an architectural expression in Europe and the mechanisms of cultural transfer between the Soviet Union and its satellites. Multiple interpretations of socialist realism have surfaced during its reevaluation since 1990. Many accounts characterize it as an outside force imposed on countries in the Eastern Bloc by heavy-handed Soviet functionaries who were determined to erase all traces of interwar modernism in the region, thereby severing any remaining connections to the West and the pre-socialist past.⁹ Further examination proves that this simplistic and inflexible image of the style as a Soviet import, uncritically replicated in the Eastern Bloc, is not sufficient for understanding the complexities of this interaction.



FIG. 3.1. VIEW ACROSS PORUBA, C. 1960.

In her 1994 exhibition and catalogue, *Sorela: česká architektura padesátých let* (Sorela: Czech Architecture of the 1950s), Radomíra Sedláková argues against the canonical interpretation of Sorela as a mere imitation of the Soviet style, taking the distinctly apolitical and ahistorical position that Sorela was the continuation of a classicizing trend in modern architecture that began in the 1920s. She posits an alternate history of modernism that puts classicism in dialectical opposition to functionalism, arguing that each style became dominant at various times according to community needs and functional requirements. She traces classicizing tendencies in projects from the 1920s by Czech architects such as Antonín Engel and Jaroslav Fragner, linking their work to Russian and American examples, including Ivan Zoltovsky's Moscow State Bank and Raymond Hood's skyscrapers. The standardized housing units of the early Stavoprojekt years and the panel buildings that became omnipresent in the 1970s and 1980s are contrasted with the apartment blocks of the Sorela period, which she describes as a time when "the typification guide was comprehensive, architects could compose housing types relatively freely from it and work with them creatively on projects for new residential ensembles."¹⁰ Her attempt to disengage Sorela from its political, social, and economic context is, however, a reductive argument that takes away local actors' power to shape their own experiences. Despite these flaws, Sedláková has succeeded in undo-

ing some of the entrenched myths of the Sorela period, such as the conflation of socialist forms with a priori bad architecture.

Architectural historian Jindřich Vybíral also wants to question judgments that equate Sorela with the “negatively viewed regime.” He links Sorela’s architectural vocabulary to both nineteenth-century historicism and postmodernism in the 1970s, identifying “three primary attributes” of Sorela—“popular character, nationality, and humanism.” These elements related to the desire to fulfill the utopian modernist project, patriotism, and the “return of architecture to art.” While recognizing the fundamentally political nature of the style and the forcefulness with which it was introduced, he also argues for the aesthetic value of the architecture itself: “Its language incorporated the traditional syntax of classicist architecture, pronouncing itself in pillared façades with rich sculpture, effectively gradated materials, a dramatically accentuated silhouette, and occasionally elements such as victory arches. Other expressive devices used by Sorela were bright colors and playful—even picturesque—detail that almost crossed the border of kitsch, expressing the ‘moment of joyous and intimate warmth.’ The iconography of Sorela deserves a study of its own.” Vybíral notes that the later style had particular appeal for postmodernists who were less interested in its “political circumstances” and more impressed by “its connecting of elitist and populist taste in its aesthetic.”¹¹

Two historians of Soviet culture have put forward especially useful reinterpretations of socialist realism, both dependent on examinations of the Marxist-Leninist underpinnings of the method. In his 1988 book, *Gesamtkunstwerk Stalin* (The Total Art of Stalinism), German literary scholar Boris Groys argues convincingly that for many who participated in cultural life at the time, socialist realism in the 1930s was actually a highly intellectualized extension of the “internal logic of the avant-garde method itself.” He comes to the polemical conclusion that “under Stalin the dream of the avant-garde was in fact fulfilled and the life of society was organized in monolithic artistic forms, though of course not those that the avant-garde itself favored.”¹²

In writing about architecture specifically, Groys positions Marxist-Leninist dialectical materialism as the basis of Soviet socialist realism. He states that, in the architectural vocabulary of the period, these Soviet buildings expressed a sense of “internal contradiction,” as opposed to the “bourgeois,” and hence avant-garde, tendency to seek “a logical consistency that [was] one-sided, purely formal, and internally ‘dead.’”¹³ In Groys’s framework, this internal contradiction was an aspect of the forward-looking ethos of socialist realism. These buildings, as well as the paintings, sculptures, novels, and musical scores being produced by artists in other realms, were participating in a collective imagining of what the future would be. The “contradiction” was that the ide-

al future could never be attained, only aspired to through collective struggle. According to Groys, a Soviet architect was judged not by his formal skills but “whether [he] strove for totality in his work, whether he was willing to relativize his own position and make himself a medium for the unity of opposites.” He writes that “Stalinist architecture is simultaneously monotonous and fascinating. It constantly offers the image of the same collective effort, the same social ecstasy, the same internal paradox—and the same failure of the individual. Two things form the inner tension of this architecture: the hope for the saving unity of opposites, in which the architect wishes to be contained, and the danger of standing out as different from this unity by fault of one’s own.” The results were “obsessive repetitions” that were “visible even to the outside observer.”¹⁴ Throughout his work, Groys reinforces his thesis that socialist realism was not a formal exercise in historicism but rather a set of artistic practices that fit into Stalin’s absolute vision for the new society.

Architectural historian Catherine Cooke builds upon Groys’s thesis by emphasizing the complexity and depth of socialist thinking in the 1930s and praising the professionalism with which architects approached their tasks.¹⁵ She remarks that too often “the design of buildings, as of other everyday artifacts, is deemed unproblematic because its products are physically familiar . . . indeed, few [cultural historians] recognize that there *are* any theories or discourses here.” She proposes that “when the political philosophy governing all decision-making about state production was materialist, neither the form of objects of material culture nor the means of their production was to be determined casually.”¹⁶ In this way, the materialist worldview at the heart of socialism strengthens Cooke’s assertion that a thoughtful and serious discussion of socialist realism was central to any understanding of Soviet and East European history, cultural or otherwise.

As Groys and Cooke have shown, it was possible to deconstruct the socialist realist argument into a series of logical propositions and even admire the depths to which architects actualized Marxist-Leninist concepts in their architecture and art. Yet with their particular histories and preferences for modern forms, few Czech and Slovak architects accepted or understood Soviet socialist realism in this way after World War II. When rhetoric about the Soviet model became more pronounced in 1949, many architects perceived the monumental, and often neoclassical, visions of the socialist future as anachronistic Soviet kitsch that did not resonate with their idea of Czechoslovakia as a modern industrial nation with architectural forms and a building industry to match. They also ignored, with a few notable exceptions, the Marxist-Leninist roots of the method. The majority focused instead on formal strategies to give the appearance of acceptance without losing all sense of their own architectural beliefs. This approach led to a reliance on

decorative schemes borrowed from Czech and Slovak historical and vernacular examples. Compromise was necessary given the political context, because by totally rejecting socialist realism, architects risked their careers and even their personal freedom.

When socialist realism was brought to the region through Soviet intervention, the situation on the ground in Czechoslovakia was quantifiably and qualitatively different from that of the Soviet Union. The country's mature industrial economy and high standard of living meant that Czechoslovakia entered its socialist phase at a higher level of development than the Soviet Union or its regional neighbors. In the Soviet case, the difference was noticeable not only when comparing Czechoslovakia in 1948 to the Soviet Union in 1933 but also when, after World War II, the war-damaged Soviet Union still lagged behind most of its Central European satellites in economic and social categories. One large gap was the sophistication and technological capacity of the building industry. In the 1920s and 1930s, Czechoslovakia, like Germany, France, and the Netherlands, had a highly developed building sector. At the same time, the Soviet building industry as a whole lacked skilled laborers, quality materials, technical knowledge, and strong professional organizations.¹⁷ This inequality became more noticeable as cooperation between the two countries and its architects increased in the early 1950s.¹⁸

The lack of engagement with the theoretical and philosophical underpinnings of socialist realism and the widespread sense that Soviet rhetoric about progress did not apply to the already-modern Czechoslovakia meant that many of the changes to architectural design in the early 1950s were superficial—literally and figuratively. Most Sorela buildings were adapted from standardized plans provided by Stavoprojekt, and architects in the regional offices then decorated the buildings with surface embellishments. More substantial changes came with urban planning as the Beaux-Arts ideal of the ensemble replaced modernist *zeilenbau*, or parallel-row, designs that were promoted in the interwar period.¹⁹ When architects turned away from socialist realism after Khrushchev's reforms, the same standardized buildings, without the decorative flourishes or Beaux-Arts-inspired urban planning schemes, were what remained.

THE "CZECHOSLOVAK ROAD" TO STALINISM

Although long associated with hardliners in Moscow, the leadership of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia pursued a distinctly national vision of socialism after the May 1946 elections.²⁰ Under the slogan "the Czechoslovak road to socialism," the party implemented a series of independent economic policies that reflected the country's existing high level of industrialization and standard of living.²¹ By late 1949, the relative independence from

Moscow that had defined the first year of Communist rule was already coming to an end. In the aftermath of the Tito-Stalin split of 1948, the creation of the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (Comecon) in early 1949, and the escalation of tensions in Korea in the summer of 1949, Stalin began exerting more pressure on the Eastern Bloc countries to prove their loyalty to the Soviet Union.²²

The Communist Party of Czechoslovakia, like its regional counterparts, responded with policy changes that brought the regime more in line with the goals of Soviet Stalinism, namely, investment in heavy industry and military infrastructure at the expense of consumer goods and personal freedoms. One of the most violent results of these changes was a series of “show trials” starting in 1949. The first trials targeted noncommunists who were perceived as threats to the regime. Soon the purges turned inward, and high-ranking Communists in Czechoslovakia, Bulgaria, Hungary, and Romania were arrested, tortured, and forced in open court to confess to high treason based on scripted testimony; many received death sentences. The most infamous of the trials was the Slánský trial in Czechoslovakia, which netted fourteen high-ranking party members, thirteen of them Jewish, including the general secretary of the party, Rudolf Slánský, who was put to death in December 1952.²³

Although scholars have generally paid little attention to incremental policy changes during the period of the First Five-Year Plan (1949–1953), large and small indicators of economic, social, and cultural change suggest that it was at the start of 1950, rather than in February 1948, that the country experienced the most dramatic changes since the end of World War II. Historian Edward Taborsky’s detailed account of the period refers to policies starting in 1950 that expanded agricultural collectivization, banned most films from the West, initiated the mass production of books by Marx, Stalin, and Gottwald, and sharply raised the targets for capital goods production.²⁴ There was also a change in rhetoric during 1949 as the term “Soviet model” replaced the phrase “national road to socialism.”

In her memoir about this period, Jewish Holocaust survivor and former Communist Heda Margolius Kovály wrote that the shift in 1950 surprised many of the regime’s early supporters who still believed that the situation in Czechoslovakia would be different from that of the Soviet Union: “I hated the hysterical adulation of Stalin, the bombastic phrases of political oratory as well as the tinkle of medals and military decorations that covered the pot bellies of Soviet officers. But, I told myself, these were all unimportant details, quite suitable, after all, for the unsophisticated Russians with their history of czarist pomp. In Czechoslovakia, it would all be different. We would not be building socialism in a backward society under conditions of imperialist intervention and inner turmoil, but at peace, in an industrially advanced country, with an

intelligent, well-educated population.” She goes on to describe how this early commitment to the Communist cause turned to despair by 1951, as food rationing continued, the housing shortage worsened, and national enterprises started to go bankrupt.²⁵

Cultural life underwent a similar transformation from 1948 to the end of 1950. After February 1948 and the reorganization of the cultural unions, debates began over what form “socialist” culture should take, although, at this early stage, few who remained in the country questioned the legitimacy of the new system itself. In 1948 and 1949, modernists who had been active in the interwar period dominated the conversation. They saw no contradiction in their support for state socialism and avant-garde principles. Architectural historian Pavel Halík writes that at the Congress of National Culture in May 1948, “socialist realism was already being mentioned as a program for artistic production, but at that time it was perceived as the possible symbiosis of modernity and revolutionary content.” By 1950, however, the upper echelons of the regime had succumbed to pressure from the Soviet Union to extend its embrace of the “Soviet model” to the cultural sphere, and Soviet-style socialist realism became the official style of the state-run cultural apparatus.²⁶

As scholars of Soviet culture have argued, the exact nature and boundaries of socialist realist doctrine remained unclear from the start. The Soviet variant can best be defined across all forms of cultural production as having multiple formal, material, and linguistic expressions that share common traits such as the belief in the absolute power of the Communist Party and its basis in Marxism-Leninism, an unflinching optimism about the future, and a preference for decorative and historicist aesthetics.²⁷ Catherine Cooke also emphasizes the socialist realist artist’s role in providing “new images” of the “radiant future.”²⁸ In the Soviet Union, she writes, socialist realism “was not about regurgitation. It was crucially about the constant invention of new *obrazy*, new ‘images’ to embody and transmit messages and myths to audiences who were themselves always ‘moving forward’ as their political consciousness and aesthetic sensibilities developed. The role of the artist as *vedyshchyni*, as literally ‘leading forward’ this mass consciousness, derives directly from this vision of art as ‘active’ in this ideological advance. Such a role was sharply contrasted to the avant-gardist’s pursuit of personal whims.” She adds that “according to the Marxist-Leninist principle of cultural continuity,” these images “served as the crucial bridge between [the people’s] own cultural heritage and the radiant Soviet future.”²⁹ This “bridge” created the sense of striving for something better that characterized the lean years of the 1930s in the Soviet Union.

By the time socialist realism was introduced to Czech and Slovak architects in 1949, it was transmitted as a series of stilted texts and incongruent

images of monumental, historicist buildings. The aspirational tone of the Soviet method was lost on a population that lived in relative comfort in a country perceived as modern and already progressive. The oft-repeated slogan “national in form, socialist in content” was politically useful but offered few clues about how the style could be implemented in its new context. This vagueness led some Czech and Slovak architects to copy slavishly from Soviet examples with little regard for the “national” forms that the style encouraged or the dialectical-materialist worldview within which Soviet socialist realism was conceived. Those who tried to work against the new method found it nearly impossible to do so, since the state owned all publishing houses, art galleries, museums, architecture firms, film studios, and media outlets. One venue for expressing public opposition to the new direction was *Architektura ČSR*, where Stavoprojekt’s technocratic and antidecorative stance was still evident in 1949, but this too would soon end.

Just as changes to economic and social policies were undertaken incrementally, there were differences in the pace and degree to which various artistic practices fell under the purview of socialist realist doctrine in 1949 and 1950. Historians John Connelly and Jiří Knapík characterize this process as the “Sovietization” of Czechoslovakia’s cultural and institutional landscape.³⁰ Representational and narrative genres such as painting, sculpture, and literature were quickly co-opted for propagandistic purposes since their relationship to socialist realist themes and forms was often direct. At the March 1949 Congress of Czechoslovak Writers, the main speakers were politicians rather than writers. A letter from President Gottwald read to the attendees “reminded [writers] of the social responsibility of their art, and the damage they could cause by ‘incorrect, unhealthy’ views.”³¹ That year, the size of the Writers’ Union shrank from 1,711 to only 220, as those writers whose work did not conform to the new program were pushed out.³²

At the Ninth Communist Party Congress two months later, Václav Kopecký, minister of information and culture, laid out an ambitious program for Czechoslovak socialist realism in all forms of cultural production. Borrowing heavily from the rhetoric of Soviet ideologue Andrei Zhdanov, Kopecký described socialist realism as a method “to realistically, artistically create in the spirit of socialism.”³³ Fine artists soon found their subject matter limited to acceptable themes, such as images of Communist leaders, scenes from workers’ everyday lives, heroic national battles, political demonstrations, and rural landscapes (fig. 3.2).³⁴

SOCIALIST REALISM IN ARCHITECTURE

The transition to socialist realism within architecture did not follow the same pattern as it did in other forms of cultural production. Since the discipline



FIG. 3.2. VOJTĚCH SEDLÁČEK, *OKOLÍ SKALKY* (THE OUTSKIRTS OF SKALKÁ), TEMPERA, 57 X 79 CENTIMETERS, 1954.

inherently possesses two frames of reference, one stylistic and one defined by technological capacity, architecture was able to hold off its co-optation by the regime for almost a year by emphasizing its functional and instrumental character over its aesthetic and visual components. The regime's immediate need to address the escalating housing shortage, as well as the impeccable Communist Party credentials of Karel Janů and Jiří Voženílek, provided protection for architects. Jiří Kroha continued to promote socialist realism in *Architektura ČSR* in 1948 and 1949, but with the exception of his designs for official exhibitions and political events, his projects remained unbuilt and few architects followed his lead.

In early 1949, the regime's interest in dictating architectural style began to emerge more clearly with the opening of an exhibition in Prague entitled "The Architecture of the Nations of the Soviet Union from the Distant Past to the Building of the Socialist Present" (*Architektura národů SSSR z dávné minulosti k výstavbě socialistického dneška*). Sponsored by the Artists' Group of the Artistic Forum (*Umělecká beseda*), a cultural organization founded in 1863 and possessed of a long-standing nationalist agenda, the exhibition consisted of more than 300 photographs arranged in 137 categories, highlighting important buildings in the history of Russian and Soviet architecture.³⁵ Among the examples were medieval Russian Orthodox churches; the monu-



FIG. 3.3. FROM THE TOP: CATHEDRAL OF GREAT NOVGOROD (1045–1052), SPAS-NĚREDICA CHURCH IN NOVGOROD (1198) (LEFT), DMITROVSKY HOUSE IN VLADIMÍR (1165–1166) (RIGHT), AND FORTIFIED CHURCH ON THE OUTSKIRTS OF SÚTKOVICE, UKRAINE (LATE FIFTEENTH CENTURY), FROM *ARCHITEKTURA NÁRODŮ SSSR Z DÁVNĚ MINULOSTI K VÝSTAVBĚ SOCIALISTICKÉHO DNEŠKA* (1949).

ments of imperial St. Petersburg; dams, bridges, and canals; Soviet-era houses of culture; and the Moscow metro stations (fig. 3.3). An accompanying catalogue included a list of items in the exhibition, 54 selected photographs, and two introductory essays by the Russian architectural historian M. I. Rzjanin—one on the history of Russian architecture and the other on thirty years of Soviet architecture.³⁶

In his essay on the Soviet period, Rzjanin offered a brief history of the early Soviet era and “the reorganization of architectural design” in 1933 with the declaration of socialist realism. He stressed the late nineteenth-century classical training of the first generation of socialist architects and the “negative moment” of constructivism.³⁷ Buildings from Central Asia figured prominently, including the national pavilions for the 1939 All-Union Agricultural Exhibition in Moscow and the medieval mausoleums that inspired them. Through the Central Asian examples, Rzjanin stressed the diversity of local and regional architecture in the “nations” of the Soviet Union, arguing that a shared respect for the history of the Russian people was the basis for a transnational concept of “Soviet architecture.”³⁸

In an article for *Architektura ČSR*, editor Oldřich Starý praised the “Architecture of the Nations” exhibition in exaggerated terms, calling it “among the most illuminating and most interesting of those the inhabitants of Prague have ever seen.” He chose to include twelve photographs from the exhibition with his text, eleven of which showed medieval structures with regional details such as mosaic tiles and onion domes or nineteenth-century monumental buildings in Leningrad (fig. 3.4). One contemporary project appeared: the winning master plan for the reconstruction of Stalingrad by Karo Alabian from 1944, which, because of its massive scale, gave little indication of what contemporary Soviet architecture looked like at the street scale (fig. 3.5). In contrast, the text focused largely on the Soviet period, praising the pace and scale of development across the entire Soviet Union, while criticizing



FIG. 3.4. VIEW OF CENTRAL LENINGRAD, SOVIET UNION, FROM *ARCHITEKTURA ČSR* (1949).



FIG. 3.5. KARO ALABIAN, PROJECT FOR THE RECONSTRUCTION OF STALINGRAD, SOVIET UNION (1944), FROM *ARCHITEKTURA ČSR* (1949).

the “formalist tendencies” of the interwar period.³⁹ In the same issue, an article by a Soviet architectural administrator about contemporary work featured nine illustrations of new buildings, including Alexander Ginzburg’s colossal fifteen-hundred-seat State Opera and Ballet from 1940 in the Siberian city of Novosibirsk (fig. 3.6).⁴⁰ As a set, the two texts and multiple illustrations communicated to readers that Soviet socialist realism was grounded in the reappropriation of the forms and materials of the Russian imperial and colonial past.

The question remained as to how this new style would be implemented in Czechoslovakia. Together with the rhetoric of the “national road to socialism” and the Communist adaptation of Czech and Slovak national symbols for its own propaganda, the exhibition and its related texts indicated that socialist



FIG. 3.6. ALEXANDER GINZBURG, STATE OPERA AND BALLET, NOVOSIBIRSK, SOVIET UNION, 1940, FROM *ARCHITEKTURA ČSR* (1949).

realism required the celebration of local, vernacular forms.⁴¹ As synthesized in the Soviet slogan “national in form, socialist in content,” this mandate suggested a return to the great “national” moments of Czech and Slovak history. Since the Czech lands and Slovakia had different early modern histories and experienced long periods of imperial rule and occupation, these moments were harder to identify and more complex in symbolic terms than were those of the Russian Empire. Following in the footsteps of the Czech national revivalists in the nineteenth century, architects located sources in the vernacular architecture of Czech and Slovak towns, as well as in what is referred to as the Bohemian Renaissance in the sixteenth century, when Habsburg emperor Rudolf II chose Prague as his capital.⁴² Architects thus had a broad palette with which to work, although the exemplars suggested that the architectural scale of Czechoslovak socialist realism would be much smaller and more humane than in the Soviet Union, where the monumentality of eighteenth-century St. Petersburg was the ultimate model.

Despite official encouragement to adopt socialist realism, the architects at Stavoprojekt resisted in 1949. For many, the “national” heritage of Czechoslovak architecture was not found in distant history or rural villages but in the industrial, universal forms of modern architecture. This debate was complicated by the fact that Czechoslovakia had not existed as a unified country until 1918, so there was no shared past on which to draw beyond the interwar period. In late 1949, the Education and Typification Institute (*Studijní a typisační ústav*) debuted the plain, boxy residential T-series apartment blocks and mandated the use of standardized types for all buildings by the start of

1950. The regime was in an uncomfortable situation at this point, because Moscow was becoming more paranoid and paternalistic as the year wore on. Given the Communist Party's success in forcefully reorienting other forms of cultural production, such as literature, art, film, and music, it was becoming an embarrassment to the politicians that architecture had not been reformed.

By the fall of 1949, the architectural administration was being pressured to adopt a more positive view of socialist realism. One channel the party used to pressure architects was the Architectural Council of Stavoprojekt, which had been created specifically to protect the artistic aspects of architecture against a "mechanical" approach to design.⁴³ From the beginning of Stavoprojekt, regime loyalist Jiří Kroha served as head of the council, and as he became more intimate with party elites, they used him to communicate with the organization's leadership. In a September 1949 letter to Stavoprojekt director Jiří Voženílek, Kroha warned that "in various situations the architectural quality of projects worked on at Stavoprojekt has been spoken of critically." He recommended that the organization "increase the number of lectures and discussions about socialist realism in architectural production in close consultation with the Union of Creative Artists and the Union of Architects." He also lamented the effects of the "quick postwar education" that left many young architects "without the fundamental groundwork for architectural practice." The solution, according to Kroha, was to look "far more than before" at "Soviet experiences in architectural work," in order to give "a large number of our architectural workers...the necessary clarity in this direction."⁴⁴ Despite this and other attempts by Kroha to counsel Voženílek on how to bring socialist realism into Stavoprojekt, the director was unable or unwilling to firmly establish the method within the organization.⁴⁵ Within two years, Voženílek lost his position as director of Stavoprojekt and Jiří Kroha became the most visible practitioner of socialist realism in the country.

REDEFINING THE ARCHITECT

Politicians' increased interest in Stavoprojekt was not surprising. As comparative literature scholar Katerina Clark argues, in the Soviet case architecture in particular was fundamental to the totalizing vision of socialist realism. She describes the "spatial myths" that are "at the heart of many canonical works of Socialist Realism" and links interest in architecture to Marxist-Leninist fundamentals and the extension of the base-and-superstructure model into physical space: "Architecture, as spatial architectonics, could be seen as the quintessential genre of Socialist Realism...[its] central role in Stalinist culture has its own logic in that building and spatial organization lie at the heart of Marx's account of society: the base-and-superstructure model. This potential was picked up in Bolshevik Party rhetoric about 'building

communism.' Building also assumed tremendous importance in Stalinist culture because of the utopian aspects in the notion of living 'in Communism,' the perfected society."⁴⁶ In this context, the regime took more notice of Stavoprojekt's failure to become sufficiently socialist realist and moved to end its relative independence.

Radomíra Sedláková has written that speculation about the new course for architecture was "put to an end in 1950": "A political directive came through: we will be a new, socially equitable society after the model of the Soviet Union, therefore our architecture also must adhere to its example. . . . To push this directive through and properly apply the desired Soviet model, a first wave of young architects—educated after the war, inclined toward revolution, and not afraid of the authorities—was already on hand. The new direction for the development of Czech architecture had been decided."⁴⁷ Around this time, Stavoprojekt's central administration in Prague and the Union of Creative Artists started a "study group, which began to grapple with the study of theoretical questions in architecture and to familiarize themselves with the foundations of socialist realism in architecture and, in particular, with the results of socialist architecture in the Soviet Union."⁴⁸ According to Zdeněk Lakomý, who led the group, this intensive engagement with theory was necessary because it was already clear by that time that "our architectural production could not continue to be built on old and worn-out functionalist theses, which until that point had been very influential for the overall direction of our architecture."⁴⁹ This group was then folded into the Education and Typification Institute, and, in July 1951, it became part of the stand-alone Research Institute for Building and Architecture (Výzkumný ústav pro stavebnictví a architektura).⁵⁰

As noted by Kroha and Sedláková, 1950 was also a time of generational conflict within the architectural community as recent graduates of politicized postwar architecture programs began to appear in the Stavoprojekt offices. Universities were efficient conduits for promoting the new methods.⁵¹ Teaching positions were sought after by architects and used to obvious political ends. For example, Jiří Kroha had been a professor at the Brno University of Technology since 1925. In 1946, he was promoted to chair of the Architecture Department and then served from 1948 to 1950 as rector of the School of Architecture and Construction.⁵² During this period, curricula rooted in the classical Western canon replaced the modern, functionalist point of view that had dominated much of Czechoslovak architectural education since the 1920s.⁵³

As Polish architect and historian Wojciech Lesnikowski has written of his own experience in Poland in the 1950s,

Stalinist architectural education represented a sophisticated combination of the beaux arts, on the one hand, and polytechnic intellectual ideas and methods of training, on the other hand. Sophisticated history, theory, painting, and sculpture courses were taught on a systematic basis in combination with mathematics, descriptive geometry, and engineering. City planning was the motivating force behind the totality of architectural training, which was in perfect harmony with communist beliefs that object making should have no role in a truly socially motivated society. In design classes Renaissance and Enlightenment theories were applied. . . . [E]ditions of Palladio and Vignola were printed all over Eastern Europe in large quantities. . . . [T]he education curriculum was constructed as a sort of a “purifier” of Western classical traditions, with the goal of bringing them back to life after decades of modernist assault on history.⁵⁴

The stress on the classical tradition helped to impart a sense of difference between younger architects and their older counterparts, many of whom had been trained by Czech pupils of Otto Wagner such as Jan Kotěra and Pavel Janák.⁵⁵ In the early 1950s, these younger architects arrived at Stavoprojekt schooled in orthodox Marxist doctrine, free of the memories of interwar practice and freshly educated about contemporary Soviet design practices.⁵⁶ Working in the Sorela style offered them an opportunity for early success and valuable professional experience.⁵⁷ Despite their young age, many of the new graduates were offered positions as design architects in the regional Stavoprojekt offices.

One example was thirty-year-old František Zounek, a former apprentice to Jiří Kroha. He left his post at Stavoprojekt Brno in March 1951 to become the lead design architect on the high-profile new town project for Košice-Šaca in the organization’s Košice office.⁵⁸ The development was planned to house construction workers for what would become one of the largest steel mills in Europe.⁵⁹ Zounek’s design for the neighborhood was similar to Kroha’s residential projects of the same period, including Ostrava-Stalingrad (the new name for Bělský Les) and Nová Dubnica. It featured standardized building types from the Stavoprojekt T-series, with some additional design elements to create a sense of hierarchy and drama, including ornamental entry gates and a tall tower on the main public building at the end of a wide boulevard lined with trees (figs. 3.7 and 3.8). Perhaps because of their young age, after Khrushchev’s December 1954 speech denouncing socialist realist excesses and what he called “useless things in architecture,” most of these architects were able to put the episode behind them quickly and continue with successful careers.⁶⁰

Architects from the interwar generation responded in various ways to this turn of events. Some retreated into less prominent roles in historic preservation, urban planning, landscape architecture, and education.⁶¹ Others put aside their personal or ethical objections to focus on housing and the



FIG. 3.7. FRANTIŠEK ZOUNEK AND TEAM, MAIN STREET IN KOŠICE-ŠACA, 1951.



FIG. 3.8. FRANTIŠEK ZOUNEK AND TEAM, T20 BLOCKS IN KOŠICE-ŠACA, 1951.

long-standing goal of improving the general living standard. The culmination of this shift away from the older generation came at the first Statewide Conference of Czechoslovak Architects, held in July 1953. The meeting was called when the Union of Czechoslovak Applied Artists split into two sections, one for art and one for architecture.⁶² Meeting delegates, including Janů, Voženílek, Kroha, and Havlíček, were asked to publicly denounce their “cosmopolitan past” in front of an audience of their peers.⁶³

Official institutional change came in September 1951, when the Czechoslovak Building Works was dissolved after three years under Janů's direction. The national enterprises that had been part of the Building Works were consolidated and transferred to the new Ministry of Building Industry. Stavoprojekt was set up as an independent national enterprise within the ministry and supervised by an executive board in Prague.⁶⁴ This signaled the start of Stavoprojekt's second socialist phase, as the government's relatively hands-off approach of the previous two years gave way to a concerted effort to force architects to comply with socialist realist methods. In this new configuration, the organization was more susceptible to political pressure and direct party intervention. The Architectural Council was disbanded and replaced by interest groups within Stavoprojekt such as Lakomý's study group at the Institute for Building and Architecture.⁶⁵ In a noteworthy turn of events, after being forced out of the top administrative job, Voženílek was appointed to lead this institute in January 1952, when it was renamed the Institute of Architecture and Town Planning (Ústav architektury a územního plánování).⁶⁶ He remained in this position until the end of 1954.⁶⁷ Lakomý and Voženílek had worked together at Baťa during the war, and, despite their differences of opinion, this may have facilitated their postwar working relationship.⁶⁸

KOPECKÝ AND NEJEDLÝ

Two distinct modes of architectural form-making emerged from attempts to define an indigenous form of socialist realism. The first was the application of the style as the literal copying of Soviet examples. The second was an attempt to create a national socialist style inspired by Soviet methods but with distinctly Czech and Slovak characteristics and dependent on the set of types already in use at Stavoprojekt. Both modes were aspects of the Sorela style. Art historian Tereza Petišková has linked these two paths, which were also discernible in the visual arts, to particular Czechoslovak politicians.⁶⁹ On one side, the minister of information, Václav Kopecký, supported the imitation of Soviet examples, a position he developed based on the hard-line stance of Soviet cultural minister Zhdanov.⁷⁰ On the other side was the minister of education and culture, Zdeněk Nejedlý, who argued that socialist realist art should derive from the national, vernacular traditions of the region.⁷¹ The Czechoslovak-Soviet Institute, publisher of *Sovětská architektura*, was part of the Ministry of Education, Science, and Art under Nejedlý.

As an example of his Sovietophile perspective, Kopecký was the most ardent political supporter of the Stalin Monument in Prague—the largest sculpture of this genre in the Eastern Bloc.⁷² Initially conceived to honor the occasion of Stalin's seventieth birthday in December 1949, the project took six years and significant resources to complete, in part because of the elaborate



FIG. 3.9. OTAKAR ŠVEC (SCULPTURE), JIŘÍ ŠTURSA, VLASTA ŠTURSOVÁ (BASE AND SITE), STALIN MONUMENT, PRAGUE, 1950–1955.

base needed to stabilize the hilltop site chosen personally by Kopecký.⁷³ The 1950 competition to select a design team resulted in a commission for sculptor Otakar Švec and former Architectural Working Group members Jiří Štursa and Vlasta Štursová.⁷⁴ They beat out eighty other designers, including the third-prize team of Jiří Kroha and Zdeněk Pešánek with sculptor Karel Pokorný. Their winning entry, a massive fifteen-meter- (fifty-foot-) high sculptural ensemble, on a prominent site overlooking the city from Letná Hill, portrayed Stalin as the leader of a group of eight supporting figures (figs. 3.9 and 3.10).⁷⁵

In an interview with a journalist before he died, Štursa recalled the project and the decision to show Stalin as part of a “collective”:

“We said no [to the single figure of Stalin], it should be a people’s monument, a collective. Ours was the only proposal to have this interpretation. They gave us first prize.” The collective idea might have been politically driven—it also had added practical advantages over a lone Stalin. “Letna is above Prague, looking down the Vltava valley,” Štursa says. “One figure would be lost.” More importantly, rather than forcing park strollers to take a disrespectful look at the Soviet leader’s backside, the Štursa-Švec model had Stalin covered from behind by two “queues”—one Czech and one Soviet—of typical socialist figures, with a hammer and sickle bringing up the rear.⁷⁶

Having personally visited the monument in 1960, Swedish architectural historian Anders Åman described its impact as “overwhelming”:

In shape, it resembled a wedge pointing inward at the city. Stalin occupied the apex, the Soviet people one side, the Czech and Slovak peoples the other side. At the back, finally, was a relief of the hammer and sickle. It was colossal. It was built of meter-high blocks of granite.... Behind Stalin there was a slight gap—to make him stand out as an individual, even if the monument was viewed from the side—and then, on both sides, came the nations rallying in his footsteps...[four figures], representatives of the workers, the peasants, the intelligentsia, and the armed forces.⁷⁷

By the time the monument was dedicated on May 1, 1955, in a May Day ceremony led by Kopecký, the political situation had changed and the Stalin Monument was already a relic of another time. Stalin and Gottwald were dead and Khrushchev had denounced Stalinist-era socialist realism. Those involved were vulnerable to criticism. In 1955, Štursa ended his tenure as director of the Architecture Department at the Technical University in Prague, although he stayed on the faculty for several decades.⁷⁸ Otakar Švec’s story was particularly tragic. He committed suicide a few weeks before the unveiling, although the circumstances remain unclear.⁷⁹ In 1962, after a political reappraisal of the errors of the Stalinist period, the sculpture itself was demolished, leaving only the empty base, which remains even today.

Few other architectural projects in Czechoslovakia followed from Kopecký’s line of thinking. The unbuilt initial proposal for Nová Ostrava by Vladimír Meduna was one. In its final built form, however, Poruba was firmly rooted in Czechoslovak traditions, and much of it could be considered more in the spirit of Nejedlý’s ideas than Kopecký’s.⁸⁰ Another prominent example of Soviet-inspired architecture was the Hotel Internacionál in the Prague neighborhood of Dejvice. Designed in 1950 by army architect František Jeřábek, the building was originally supposed to house Warsaw Pact soldiers but eventually became a luxury hotel to host foreign



FIG. 3.10. STALIN MONUMENT, C. 1960.



FIG. 3.11. FRANTIŠEK JEŘÁBEK AND TEAM, HOTEL INTERNACIONÁL, PRAGUE, 1950–1957.

guests. Its stepped tower, monumental entrance plaza, and extravagant interior finishes, including tapestries, ornamental ceilings, marble floors, and fresco paintings, represented the most literal application of Soviet-style socialist realist principles in a built project anywhere in the country (fig. 3.11).⁸¹ A similar project for an army headquarters was also planned for the center of Dejvice in 1954, but the project was abandoned with the change in architectural direction after Khrushchev's reforms (fig. 3.12).⁸²

In practice, Nejedlý was more important to the formulation of Sorela than Kopecký was. The strength of his influence can be attributed to deep-seated feelings of national pride and a sense of Czechoslovak regional exceptionalism that remained throughout the socialist period. It was also an issue of scale. Sorela buildings that looked to the local context were smaller, more integrated into their urban context, and closer to design principles embraced during the interwar period than were those trying to be like buildings in the Soviet Union. Projects from Kroha's design atelier, including the new town of Nová Dubnica and the civic center for Ostrava-Stalingrad, exemplified the Nejedlý position in their attempts to create an indigenous socialist realist vocabulary based on historic Czech and Slovak exemplars.⁸³

The many standardized housing units completed in the Sorela style in the early 1950s also derived their architectural details from Nejedlý's formu-



FIG. 3.12. PAVEL BAREŠ, JAROSLAV KADEŘÁBEK, JAROSLAV KÁNDL, AND KAREL PRAGER, PROJECT FOR AN ARMY HEAD-QUARTERS, PRAGUE, 1954.

lation of regional traditions, although these were more about appropriate decoration than they were the definition of a new national style. In his role as the theorist of socialist realism within the Stavoprojekt research institutes, Lakomý made the case that the key to socialist realism in Czechoslovakia was the dialectical synthesis of typification and creativity. In an eighteen-page article in *Architektura ČSR* in 1951, illustrated with vernacular examples from Czechoslovakia, images of new Soviet buildings, and proposals for T-series buildings decorated with vernacular motifs, he elaborated on what he saw as the only proper direction for Stavoprojekt—simple and economic artistic treatment of the typified and standardized buildings already in production.

Lakomý argued that too much attention was being given to the narrow topic of architectural ornamentation and details like columns, pilasters, and cornices. Instead, the focus should be industrial production of artistically designed buildings made of larger and more economical parts:

The question should not be phrased as to whether we should or should not stick architectural elements and components on our buildings in order for them to become architecture. Our buildings must be architectural creations in the sense of all of the broadest foundations of the method of socialist realism where economy does not stand in opposition to beauty. But on the contrary, the highest mastery requires at the same time, the highest attention to all means of expression

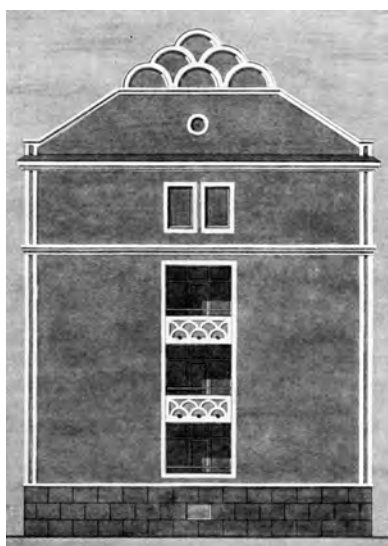


FIG. 3.13. FIFTEENTH-CENTURY TOWER IN TÁBOR AS SHOWN IN *ARCHITEKTURA ČSR* (1951).

FIG. 3.14. T-SERIES BUILDING WITH TÁBOR TOWER DETAIL, AS SHOWN IN *ARCHITEKTURA ČSR* (1951).

and thus the expressive means of art, and the development of technology, which must truly go hand in hand with an inseparable connection to artistic development.

He continued, “We must learn to look at typification as the new creative and plastic material from which we can create grand artistic works from an urban ensemble to a small detail. The example of Soviet architecture shows us today that this is the right direction and the only possible one.”⁸⁴ One particularly telling example in the article paired two buildings: the fifteenth-century fortification tower in the Hussite town of Tábor with its distinctive six half-circle motif and a façade study for a T20 building, which repeated the same motif at the roofline and on two balcony rails (figs. 3.13 and 3.14). Because of its connection to national hero Jan Hus, the town was an appropriate vernacular reference in the terms of Sorela. In a caption to the photo of the tower, Lakomý described it as “an example of how the most austere stereometric shape, which is a simple square tower adorned with an austere motif, becomes a compelling architectural creation.”⁸⁵ As was consistent with his understanding of the method, this T20 building would “become architecture” with prefabricated ornamentation attached onto the standard type, and examples of such components appeared in a 1952 article in *Architektura ČSR* (fig. 3.15).⁸⁶

THE ARCHITECTURAL PRESS

The architectural press played a leading role in defining the new agenda. Books by Soviet architects on topics such as urban planning, socialist realist theory, and the history of Soviet architecture began to appear in Czech translation in 1951.⁸⁷ *Architektura ČSR* devoted increasing space to discussions of socialist realism, Soviet architecture, and Czechoslovakia’s “architectural heritage,” which would soon be mobilized in the effort to decorate buildings with appropriate national forms.⁸⁸ The final piece of this media blitz was the new journal *Sovětská architektura* (Soviet Architecture), which debuted in the spring of 1951 and was published for fewer than four years.

Sponsored by the Czechoslovak-Soviet Institute, the journal's purpose was to publish images of Soviet projects, show the breadth of architectural experimentation under way in the Soviet Union, explain new technologies, and offer texts by Soviet architects in Czech translation. The journal was necessary, in part, because so few people in Czechoslovakia could read Russian in the early 1950s.

As the journal of the Union of Architects, *Architektura ČSR* offered the most complete and complex response to socialist realism from the Czechoslovak point of view. The journal never published a specific list of architectural criteria for Sorela, although it was full of declarations of the appropriateness of socialist realism for Czechoslovakia and examples of acceptable projects by local architects. In addition to articles by prominent figures such as Kroha and Lakomý, *Architektura ČSR* featured essays on rural vernacular architecture, prefabrication techniques, historic Czech and Slovak towns, and national building traditions in Czechoslovakia, the Soviet Union, and other countries in the Eastern Bloc. The increasingly decorative work of regional Stavoprojekt offices figured prominently in the journal during these years, as did student projects from the universities. Eighty pages of student work provided the only content of the longest issue of *Architektura ČSR* in 1953, indicating both the importance of the universities as centers of Sorela thinking and a lack of other built projects to illustrate (fig. 3.16).⁸⁹

The most intense period of Sorela design at the Stavoprojekt offices started in 1951 and ended with Khrushchev's speech in late 1954. One characteristic of this period, and socialist-era architecture in general, was long construction delays due to problems with the supply and delivery of materials, a lack of skilled laborers in critical industrial regions, and difficulties managing planned budgets. So although the style had already been discounted by politicians, Sorela projects appeared in *Architektura ČSR* as late as 1957, when the last of the 1954 projects were finally com-



FIG. 3.15. PREFABRICATED ELEMENTS LIKE THIS ONE WERE USED TO EMBELLISH T-SERIES BUILDINGS.



FIG. 3.16. PROJECT FOR A TRAIN STATION IN TRNAVA FROM VLADIMÍR KARFÍK'S ATELIER AT THE FACULTY OF ARCHITECTURE AND BUILDING IN BRATISLAVA, 1952.

pleted. In this way, the Sorela era lasted longer on the pages of the journal than in the architecture offices themselves. This was in contrast to the three-year run of *Sovětská architektura*, which roughly paralleled the existence of socialist realism as a design method, reinforcing its didactic and propagandistic nature.

The content of *Architektura ČSR* also reflected new working methods implemented at Stavoprojekt in 1951. Following on the Marxist-Leninist theme of “collective work,” competitions were staged for high-profile civic projects across the country, and the results received extensive coverage in the journal. Typically, however, the entries from teams at the regional Stavoprojekt offices were not socialist realist enough for the new Stavoprojekt executive board, and most were not built. These projects included a new administrative office tower for the Slovak Planning Office in Bratislava, which two architects writing in *Architektura ČSR* described as second only to the Stalin Monument in Prague as “the most important architectural project being designed in Czechoslovakia.”⁹⁰ The winning project by Josef Havlíček’s team from Stavoprojekt in Prague was a bold skyscraper with two intersecting rectangular volumes (figs. 3.17 and 3.18). With its flat roofs and cubic form, it was similar in scale and proportion to American skyscrapers of the time. Although the Bratislava project was not built, Havlíček did succeed in building the group of

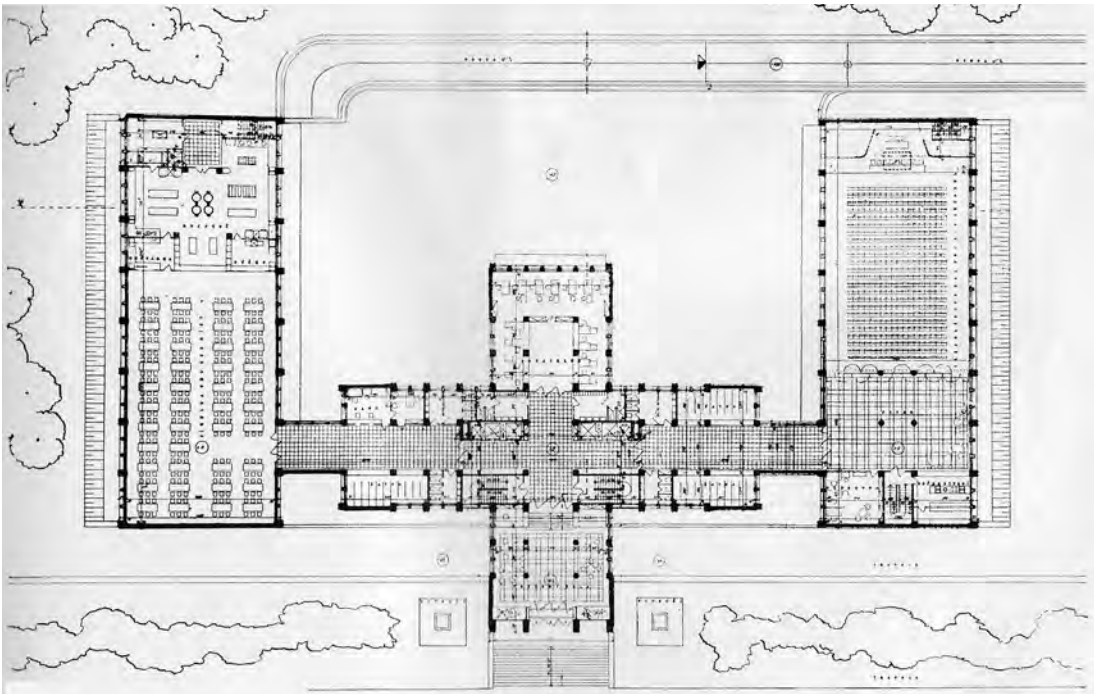


FIG. 3.17. JOSEF HAVLÍČEK AND TEAM FROM STAVOPROJEKT, PRAGUE, COMPETITION PROJECT FOR THE SLOVAK PLANNING OFFICE IN BRATISLAVA, 1951.

FIG. 3.18. GROUND-FLOOR PLAN FOR THE SLOVAK PLANNING OFFICE IN BRATISLAVA, 1951.

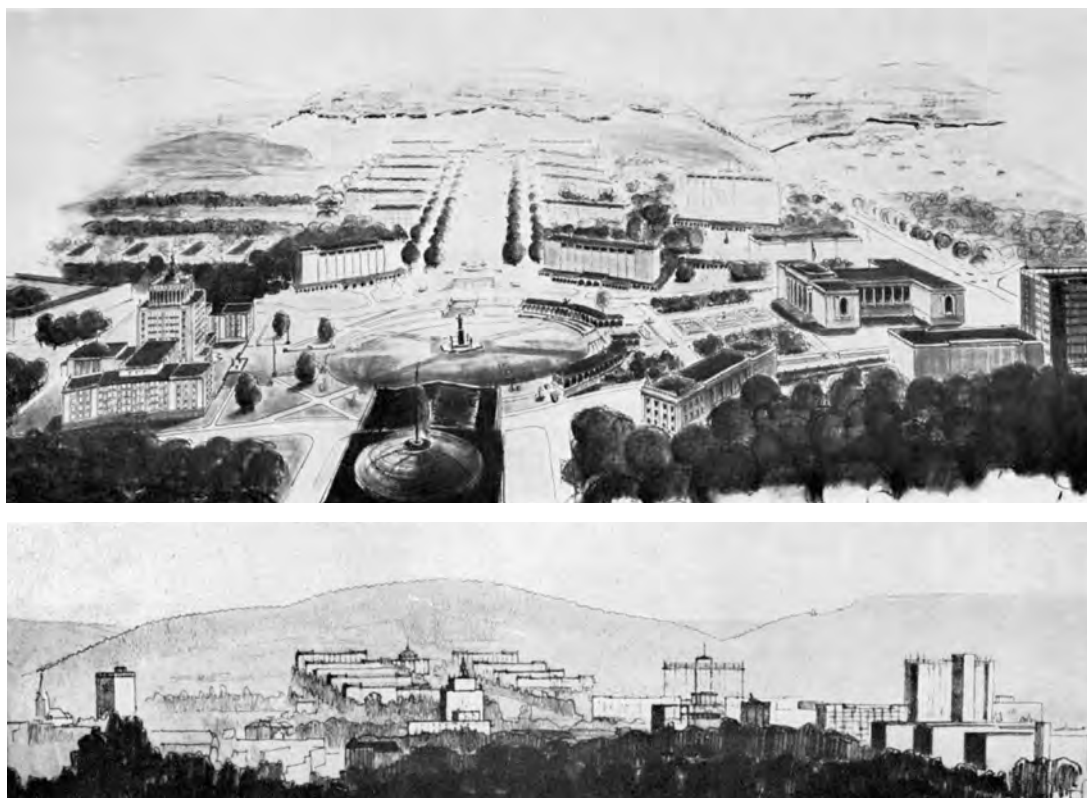


FIG. 3.19. A. ZIKMUND, E. STAŠA, AND F. ROZHON, COMPETITION PROJECT FOR REGIONAL NATIONAL COMMITTEE HEADQUARTERS, GOTTWALDOV, 1951.

six skyscraper apartment towers in Kladno-Rozděllov that he had proposed in 1946 as part of the Model Housing Development program, although they were not completed until 1959.⁹¹ Several other competitions, such as the project for the Monument to the Slovak National Uprising in Banská Bystrica, ended without winners and were abandoned.⁹²

In 1951, just as the political pressure to design Sorela buildings became more intense, the Regional National Committee in Gottwaldov held a competition for a new headquarters (figs. 3.19 and 3.20).⁹³ Gottwaldov was the new name for Zlín that had been chosen by the Communist-led city government in 1949 to honor Klement Gottwald and to disassociate the town from Baťa. As an image from this period illustrates, the Communist government worked hard to co-opt the city's spaces and win over its famously loyal-to-Baťa citizens. Officials used symbolic buildings, such as the movie theater and com-



FIG. 3.20. F. BARTOŠ, V. KUBEČKA, Z. PLESNÍK, AND O. STACH, COMPETITION PROJECT FOR REGIONAL NATIONAL COMMITTEE HEADQUARTERS, GOTTWALDOV, 1951.

munity center, which became the workers' club for Svít (the name of the shoe company created after the Baťa family took its operations out of Czechoslovakia), as locations for political rallies and Sorela murals (fig. 3.21).⁹⁴ Any new and politically important building would have to compete visually with the city's iconic sixteen-story Baťa skyscraper, designed in 1937 by Vladimír Korfík and one of the country's best known symbols of capitalist success. For obvious reasons, the new Communist Party building could not be less prominent in the skyline than the former Baťa tower, and each entry included an image of the new skyline showing the relationship of the two buildings. In every example illustrated in *Architektura ČSR*, the buildings were of equal height. Given the context and the need for a tall building, there was an expectation within the Stavoprojekt administration that, particularly for this project, architects would embrace Soviet examples of embellished, wedding-



FIG. 3.21. COMMUNIST PARTY EVENT OUTSIDE OF HOTEL AND MOVIE THEATER IN GOTTWALDOV, C. 1950.

cake-styled skyscrapers, such as the “Seven Sisters” under construction in Moscow at the same time.⁹⁵ This expectation proved incorrect, as entries rooted in interwar modernism and the *Bauhaus* style of modular brick-and-glass construction dominated. No winner was declared. Two groups of architects were, however, asked to resubmit projects more “in the spirit of socialist realism.”⁹⁶ In the end, nothing was built.

The most famous project of the era resulting from a competition was the House of Culture in Ostrava by Jaroslav Fragner, a celebrated interwar modernist and professor at the Academy of Fine Arts in Prague. The Ministry of Education and the Council of Trade Unions sponsored the limited competition in 1954, and it originally included two separate buildings, one for a House of Culture and the other for a House of Pioneers for the Communist youth movement.⁹⁷ Three teams competed, each based at a university—Fragner at the Academy of Fine Arts, Antonín Černý from the Technical University in Prague, and Bohuslav Fuchs and Miroslav Kopřiva from the Brno University of Technology. The new complex was purposefully sited halfway between the historic center of Ostrava and the proposed new development in Nová Ostrava, but only the House of Culture was completed (fig. 3.22).⁹⁸ Fragner’s austere

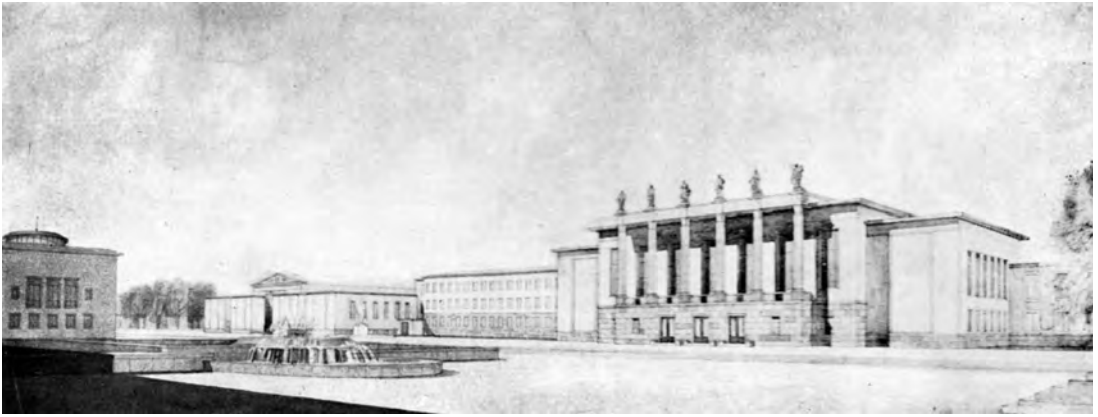


FIG. 3.22. JAROSLAV FRAGNER, PROJECT FOR THE HOUSE OF CULTURE AND THE HOUSE OF PIONEERS, OSTRAVA, 1954.

FIG. 3.23. HOUSE OF CULTURE, OSTRAVA, 1954–1961.

building, clad in travertine and ceramic tile, had oversized square columns topped with figural sculptures at the main entrance and a sprawling plan that connected movie and puppet theaters on the building's west side to a large auditorium on the east side. Multiple revisions of the façade design occurred in the years that followed as the slow pace of construction pushed the completion date back and the original proposal was no longer as desirable. Martin Strakoš has described the style of the final project, not completed until 1961, as "intense modern classicism" rather than Sorela (fig. 3.23).⁹⁹ Due to its size and position on a primary transportation route from the city center to industrial neighborhoods on the city's west side, the building remains an imposing presence in Ostrava even today.

The most provocative and influential addition to coverage in the architectural press in the early 1950s was information about Soviet architectural practice. Starting in the fall of 1950, *Architektura ČSR* noticeably increased the number of articles devoted to Soviet topics. Before the establishment of *Sovětská architektura* in late 1951, the trend accelerated, and *Architektura ČSR* became the primary conduit for Soviet texts in translation, articles on the history of Russian architecture, and contemporary Soviet polemics on socialist realism. Each of the first three issues in 1951 (numbers 1–2, 3–4, and 5–6) alternated articles by leading Soviet architects with updates on projects from the regional Stavoprojekt offices. In most cases, the Soviet texts were accompanied by illustrations of built work, such as lavish apartments in Moscow, and the Czech and Slovak articles showed unbuilt proposals that were under consideration, including several failed competition entries like the project for a regional national committee building in Olomouc from 1951 (figs. 3.24 and 3.25).¹⁰⁰ This pattern set up a hierarchical relationship between established Soviet architects and novice Czechs and Slovaks whose tentative forays into socialist realism were still untested and, judging by the competition results, not yet "socialist" enough.

With the change of leadership at Stavoprojekt, the political elite and new architectural administration wanted to quickly increase exposure to Soviet examples in the media. In the summer of 1951, the editorial board placed an announcement at the back of an issue of *Architektura ČSR*, proclaiming the creation of *Sovětská architektura*: "Our new journal . . . will make it possible to inquire still more intensely and more deeply into Soviet architecture and urbanism, to follow the overwhelming progress attained in the creation of architecture through the method of socialist realism, to follow the technical progress of the building industry, and to follow magazines, books, exhibitions, symposia, discussions, and events in the world of architecture." According to the notice, the two journals had reached an agreement. *Sovětská architektura* would focus on "illuminating and stimulating" topics to create



FIG. 3.24. A. G. MORDVINOV, RUSSIAN APARTMENT HOUSES ON GORKY STREET IN MOSCOW, 1940 AS SHOWN IN *ARCHITEKTURA ČSR* (1951).



FIG. 3.25. V. VYCHODIL AND D. KOLÁŘ FROM STAVOPROJEKT OLMOUC, PROSTĚJOV BRANCH, COMPETITION PROJECT FOR REGIONAL NATIONAL COMMITTEE BUILDING, OLMOUC, 1951.



FIG. 3.26. APARTMENT BUILDING ON UPRISING SQUARE, MOSCOW, AS SHOWN IN *SOVĚTSKÁ ARCHITEKTURA* (1954).



FIG. 3.27. CZECH VERNACULAR EXAMPLE, CASTLE IN LITOMYŠL, 1567–1581, AS SHOWN IN *SOVĚTSKÁ ARCHITEKTURA* (1954).

“widespread interest” in Soviet architecture among “all of the professional circles.” *Architektura ČSR* would “only publish basic essays on the results of Soviet architecture and urbanism...otherwise we relinquish the detailed information about Soviet architecture to the new magazine.”¹⁰¹

During its short run, *Sovětská architektura* published articles that covered a wide variety of topics, ranging from “theory, criticism, and the history of architecture” to “architectural design,” “region planning and the construction of cities,” and “typification, prefabrication, industrialization” (figs. 3.26 and 3.27).¹⁰² Although the goal of the journal was to instruct architects on how to design in an appropriate style, the articles focused on how the methodology of socialist realism was to be applied in a given circumstance to produce a satisfying result. Many articles discussed technical aspects of socialist realism, including the mass production of ornamentation for façades and time-saving construction techniques.¹⁰³ As a result of the extensive coverage of “detailed information” in *Sovětská architektura*, *Architektura ČSR* did not have to engage with the most excessive examples of Soviet socialist realism. It focused, instead, on Sorela as the national expression of socialist architecture as promoted by Kroha and others.

In hindsight, this dichotomy had other consequences as well. The split created one journal to show Czechs and Slovaks what socialist realism was in the Soviet Union and another journal to illustrate the attempts by Czechs and Slovaks to meet this standard in their local context. Since *Sovětská architektura* was published by the Ministry of Education, Science, and Art, led by

Nejedlý until 1953, the projects and polemics in the journal became something associated with another country's national expression. In Catherine Cooke's terms, the journal was a window into "images" of Soviet culture that could not and should not be replicated in Czechoslovakia, where a different context required a uniquely Czechoslovak vision of the socialist future.¹⁰⁴ For example, the introduction to a 1953 essay by V. Koreňkov on typification methods included this statement: "To this point, we have only very superficially known the overall working methods of designing typified projects in the Soviet Union. Most often we have concerned ourselves with material that supports practical results in construction according to typified projects without really trying to understand the working system of typified design. Nevertheless it is indisputable that from these working methods, we can best be instructed on how to solve analogous problems in our distinct circumstances."¹⁰⁵ This separation, therefore, strongly reinforced the concept of socialist realism as a shared method rather than an imported style to copy. This method needed visionaries to conceive and implement it as an architectural vocabulary in the "distinct circumstances" of Czechoslovakia.

During this time, the Soviet Union did not totally disappear from *Architektura ČSR*. More than an entire issue was devoted to the first official visit by Czech and Slovak architects to the Soviet Union in October and November 1952, when a delegation of five men traveled there for almost a month.¹⁰⁶ They included Jaroslav Fragner; Oldřich Starý, editor of *Architektura ČSR*; Jozef Lacko, an architecture professor from Bratislava; Vladimír Chamrád, an architect who was deputy mayor of Prague; and František Zounek, from Stavoprojekt in Košice.¹⁰⁷ Upon their return, each architect recounted his experiences in an article for *Architektura ČSR*. Many photographs of contemporary buildings accompanied the articles. There was also a series of group portraits showing the delegation in locations around the country, such as a Moscow metro station and the main square in Stalingrad, always looking appropriately impressed and purposeful (figs. 3.28 and 3.29).

Given the timing of the trip and the effusive descriptions of amenities in Soviet cities, the accounts reflected more about the tense political climate in Czechoslovakia than about the conditions in the Soviet Union.¹⁰⁸ The pictures of multiple skyscrapers, the interiors of the Moscow metro, stadiums, and elegant apartment buildings would, however, have made an impression on the journals' readers at a time when few new buildings were being completed in their country. In his travelogue, Jaroslav Fragner described conversations with Soviet architects about the "crisis" in Czechoslovak architecture and the legacy of the interwar years: "They spoke about the contemporary crisis in Czechoslovak architecture with seriousness and tact. They referred to the reverberations of critical internal and external sources of cataclysmic politi-



FIG. 3.28. CZECHOSLOVAK DELEGATION TO THE SOVIET UNION WITH VLASOV, HEAD ARCHITECT OF MOSCOW. FROM THE LEFT, STANDING IN THE FRONT ROW: ZOUNEK, FRAGNER, VLASOV (USSR), STARÝ, MARKOV (USSR), CHAMRÁD, LACKO, LAGUTĚNKO (USSR).

FIG. 3.29. DELEGATION IN THE TAGANSKÝ METRO STATION, MOSCOW.

cal changes that Czech and Slovak architects are having trouble working out in their own production, so that—just as before—they can find the path to profound sincerity once again. In such a tradition, and in the wonderful tradition of Czech and Slovak architecture, which they wholeheartedly admire, they see the reliable assurance of the future of Czechoslovak architectural production.”¹⁰⁹ Fragner’s response to the trip stood out from the others, since he reflected on personal encounters with the Soviets and the everyday operations of the profession. His laments on the current situation in Czechoslovakia were neutralized to some degree by the observations he made about the importance of Soviet architects to the socialist project. His comments reflected an underlying optimism that the situation, as bad as it was in 1952, could eventually get better. In fact, Fragner remained in practice long enough to see the professional environment improve. He was able to change his 1954 House of Culture project for Ostrava, originally a Sorela design, to something more stylistically modern during its construction in the late 1950s.

For the next year, *Architektura ČSR* promoted a similarly hopeful vision of socialist architecture, despite few positive results. Unbuilt projects from the regional Stavoprojekt offices and universities filled most pages of the journal in 1953. By early the following year, photographs of the first completed Sorela projects were ready to be published. Many of these projects were housing developments composed of modified standardized buildings on the rural edges of booming industrial towns. One such example was the housing development Šumbark-Bludovice near Ostrava, which would be joined with several other new neighborhoods to create the town of Havířov (Miners’ Town) in 1955 (fig. 3.30).¹¹⁰

Just one month after Khrushchev’s speech condemning the excesses of Stalinist architecture and only three years after the journal had been created to spread “illuminating and stimulating” images, *Sovětská architektura* folded after the last issue



FIG. 3.30. A. FENCL, B. BÖHM, J. ŠKARDA, J. KUBÍČEK, AND P. PRINC, ŠUMBARK-BLUDOVICE HOUSING DEVELOPMENT, 1954.

in 1954.¹¹¹ Despite this, the pace of completed Sorela projects continued to increase. The output reached its peak in 1956, when *Architektura ČSR* needed almost six hundred pages to illustrate newly completed projects and to report on innovative building technologies. These illustrations were actually the residue of Sorela in Czechoslovakia rather than an expression of a still-vital design methodology. By 1955, Khrushchev's statements had transformed the profession once again and returned it to its modernist roots, albeit without the creative or social freedoms once associated with the avant-garde.

PORUBA

The complexities of Sorela's emergence and decline in Czechoslovakia can be best understood in the project for Nová Ostrava. By 1951, the regime needed a high-profile architectural project to prove to Moscow that it was finally abandoning the "Czechoslovak road" and moving toward the "Soviet model." Not only were politicians anxious to see changes but average Czechs and Slovaks were waiting for signs that the Communist Party would follow through on its 1948 rhetoric about providing a better future through socialism. The regime chose to focus on the design and construction of a new city near Ostrava, first called Nová Ostrava and later renamed Poruba. The project had an architectural as well as an economic role to play in the transformation of socialist Czechoslovakia as heavy industry started to dominate the planned economy and industrial cities like Ostrava needed more housing and services as quickly as possible.

As an indicator of the relationship between this project and the development of industry, the plans for Nová Ostrava were first announced by Gustav Kliment, minister of heavy industry, at a political meeting in Ostrava on August 11, 1951. In his speech that day, Kliment described the government's plan to turn the coal-mining and steel-producing city of Ostrava into the country's "first socialist city," what was affectionately called the "steel heart" of Czechoslovakia.¹¹² He spoke optimistically about the future as the government "embarked on a journey to build a new, happy, and socialist Ostrava." Assembling to hear the announcement, made with typical Communist pomp, was an impressive crowd, including National Front vice president Antonín Fiala; local leaders from the Czechoslovak Communist Party, the army, and the Committee for National Security; decorated shockworkers; and renowned local poet Petr Bezruč. A Soviet film crew even turned up for the event with famous Russian actor and diplomat Boris Petrovich Chirkov, a Soviet national artist and member of the Supreme Soviet.¹¹³

Kliment announced a program that included building a new, larger iron-works in the Kunčice district on the outskirts of Ostrava, which would be called the New Iron Works of Klement Gottwald (Nová huť Klementa Gottwalda)



FIG. 3.31. VLADIMÍR MEDUNA, MILOSLAV ČTVRTNÍČEK, AND ČENĚK VOREL, PERSPECTIVE OF NOVÁ SOCIALISTICKÁ OSTRAVA RENDERED BY JIŘÍ KLEN, 1952.

in honor of the Czechoslovak president and longtime party head. There were also plans to expand mining operations in the region and increase production capacity at the 125-year-old Vítkovice Iron Works, also recently renamed the Vítkovice Iron Works of Klement Gottwald. The final item of the program, which seems to have attracted the most attention in the local and national press, was the announcement of plans to build a new settlement on land adjacent to the existing city of Ostrava. The settlement, Nová Ostrava, was proposed as a civic and administrative center with housing for 150,000 residents, increasing Ostrava's total population by 75 percent within fifteen years.¹¹⁴ In December 1951, the goal was increased to 195,000 people in 50,000 apartments by 1963 (fig. 3.31).¹¹⁵

The announcement of the new city was necessary in order to recruit and retain workers for the expanding mines, iron works, and steel mills. At the same time, the design of the city itself was an opportunity to showcase the government's commitment to socialist realism. As Catherine Cooke has noted, in the Soviet case, "when the political philosophy governing all decision-making about state production was materialist, neither the form of objects

of material culture nor the means of their production was to be determined casually.”¹¹⁶ In the contemporary text titled “We Are Building the Cities of Socialism,” the designs of Nová Ostrava and the nearby developments that would become Havířov were described as responses to the “complete chaos” that had been left by the capitalist system:

The socialist construction of cities differs diametrically from capitalist urbanism. It differs in that it exclusively carries the Stalinist slogan, care of man. It does not have any obstacles due to property ownership or individual plots and one can fully advance according to the wishes of a socialist man. It differs from capitalist urbanism in that it is always planned and the plans do not remain only on paper, but they are immediately realized. The realization does not happen after one object, but the impact comes from the entire city district. . . . The central municipal buildings are created at the most extravagant architectural scale, while the residential buildings underscore the intimacy of people’s privacy. All of the spaces are always created from artistic perspectives. The whole city is subjected to one architectural order. These fundamental rules of the Soviet city are also exercised in the new socialist cities of the Ostrava region.¹¹⁷

In this sense, the projects for Nová Ostrava and Havířov were physical manifestations of the socialist system and its intention to improve the quality of life for the working classes.

The opportunity to oversee the design team for the master plan of Nová Ostrava was given to Vladimír Meduna, a young Russophile architect at Stavoprojekt Ostrava. Despite the claim that socialist urbanism was different from capitalist urbanism because plans did “not remain only on paper” but were “immediately realized,” his proposal, like many socialist master plans, did not materialize as first imagined. From the start there was a clash between ambition and capacity. Chronic shortages of materials, skilled laborers, and workers’ accommodations, along with political turmoil and changes in stylistic preferences, meant that Nová Ostrava emerged in a truncated form and with the new, less ambitious name of Poruba after the village and small stream on the site.¹¹⁸ Progress was so slow that only the first 20 percent of the neighborhood was built before socialist realism fell out of favor around 1956. Most of the remaining phases were built over the next thirty years according to adapted master plans that reflected architectural styles popular at the time.¹¹⁹ Other parts of the site remain undeveloped even today.

Aspects of Kopecký’s and Nejedlý’s formulations of socialist realism can be found in the built project, which involved more than four hundred designers, including teams from Stavoprojekt offices in Ostrava, Prague, and Brno, as well as an architectural committee with representatives from the Union of Creative Artists and the universities.¹²⁰ In its final form, the neighborhood retained some sense of the grandeur of Soviet socialist realism with its mon-

umental entrance gate, wide boulevards, and a classicist decorative scheme, yet it was also designed to a pedestrian scale with intimate courtyards, pleasant streets, and many parks. The urban scheme for Poruba may be linked not only to vernacular sources but also to regional precedents such as Viennese social housing from the 1920s.

Because of the volume and depth of modern design in interwar Czechoslovakia, architectural historians have long lamented what Rostislav Švácha has called “the end of the avant-garde” after 1948.¹²¹ Sorela was perceived as running counter to the country’s strong modernist traditions, and the Iron Curtain represented the closing off of Eastern Europe to the West and its legacies. Boris Groys’s concept of “totality” is useful here in providing a counterpoint to this interpretation of architecture as primarily stylistic practice with an underlying logic and a method that relies on formal principles. Groys argues that socialist realism, like the avant-garde movement before it, was a product of an all-encompassing modern vision of society that offered no way to operate outside of its boundaries. Since dialectical materialism created “internal contradiction” and “paradox,” struggle was inherent in the socialist condition and style was not “logical, consistent, or uncontradictory.”¹²²

Although many Czech and Slovak architects did not accept the Marxist-Leninist rhetoric, the social, economic, and political conditions of the early 1950s meant that their architecture was part of this “totality” in absolute terms. Stavoprojekt served the interests of the state and, therefore, of the party and the people as well. Any objections about the formal qualities of Sorela were perceived as secondary to the ability of these buildings to make an “emotional connection [with the people]...to look monumental but at the same time seem intimate, human, cozy.”¹²³ In these terms, Poruba was an exemplary socialist realist housing development that succeeded in creating “images” of the socialist future that were unlike anything the local people had seen before. Many of the neighborhood’s residents came to their new apartments from dilapidated miners’ cottages. For them, these large, elegant buildings were nothing short of the physical embodiment of progress. The buildings not only looked like palaces but also offered indoor plumbing, hot water, and reliable heat—tangible signs that the socialist future would be better than the capitalist past they were leaving behind.

The roots of Ostrava’s housing problems stretched back to the 1820s, when Rudolf Jan, the Habsburg archduke and archbishop of Olomouc, opened the Iron Works of Rudolf (Rudolfová huť) on church land in the Ostrava neighborhood of Vítkovice.¹²⁴ Soon this former imperial outpost was transformed into a regional trading hub with a strong industrial base, a prosperous upper middle class, and a steady flow of new workers leaving the rural areas for economic opportunities in the city. The immigration was so rapid in the nineteenth

century that Ostrava's population doubled every twenty years.¹²⁵ In the 1860s, by then under the ownership of the prosperous Rothschild family of Vienna, the operation was expanded and renamed the Vítkovice Iron and Steel Works.¹²⁶ In the late nineteenth century, the wealthy built art nouveau villas and speculative apartment houses near the city center, while new neighborhoods of primitive workers' cottages and temporary barracks continued to spring up a few miles away in the Vítkovice area. By the early twentieth century, the downtown included a large commercial square, churches, synagogues, cafes, schools, upscale apartment houses, and several department stores. Although Ostrava remained provincial in relation to Prague and Brno, the city experienced a similar building boom in the prosperous interwar years following the creation of Czechoslovakia in 1918. Notable buildings from the era include the Anglo-Czechoslovak Bank by Prague architect Josef Gočár from 1923 and the Bachner Department Store from 1930 by German architect Erich Mendelsohn. The city's main square featured two ultramodern stores—a Baťa retail outlet from 1930–1931 by local architects František Stalmach and Jan Svoboda in conjunction with the Baťa design office and the Pešat Department Store from 1932 by Brno architect Bohuslav Fuchs (fig. 3.32).¹²⁷

This prosperity contributed to housing shortages as more workers arrived. Living conditions continued to deteriorate, with many mining families living without indoor plumbing or running water as late as the 1950s.¹²⁸ It was already common in the 1930s to chop up single-family houses into smaller apartments to accommodate more workers.¹²⁹ The growing working-class population in Ostrava also proved to be a natural base of support for the Communist Party, which was legal in Czechoslovakia from its inception in 1921. The Red Army liberated Ostrava in 1945, and its presence was felt much more intensely there than in other parts of Czechoslovakia. For example, unlike many other cities that were ambivalent toward the Soviet Union and communism at the end of the war, Ostrava erected a popular bronze and marble monument in a city park in 1946 to commemorate the arrival of the Red Army. The Communist leadership used these local conditions to their advantage, blaming the housing shortage and the poor living conditions in Ostrava on capitalist excess and the abuse of the working class. The Soviet system was portrayed as a better alternative. This argument found strong support among the inhabitants of Ostrava, with 40.6 percent of voters casting their ballots for the communists in the democratic elections of 1946.¹³⁰

World War II and the events of 1948 set the stage for Ostrava's most dramatic transition—from provincial industrial city to socialist showpiece. During the war, more than 30 percent of the housing stock in the northern part of the Ostrava region was destroyed or damaged.¹³¹ Although the city itself suffered little damage, the displaced residents of nearby cities and towns such



FIG. 3.32. OSTRAVA CITY CENTER (1930S). THE PEŠAT DEPARTMENT STORE BY BOHUSLAV FUCHS IS THE NARROW BUILDING TO THE LEFT OF THE BAŤA STORE, DESIGNED BY LOCAL ARCHITECTS FRANTIŠEK STALMACH AND JAN SVOBODA.

as Opava and Fulnek put even more pressure on the tight housing market in the area. With shortages from the 1930s still unresolved, the housing situation in the Ostrava region grew even more dire after 1945. A 1950 report stated that Ostrava was one of the most densely populated cities in the country, with more than 340 residents per square kilometer.¹³² Although this density does not compare to overcrowding in today's developing countries, after World War II many inhabitants of Ostrava lived in one- or two-story buildings without running water or electricity.

The national government's first major housing initiative was the Model Housing Development program in 1946, two years before the Communist Party came to power. The program continued with minor changes through 1950, but in the end, few units were completed according to the original designs. Documents from the Ostrava site at Bělský Les showed repeated complaints about shortages of building materials and skilled construction workers as well as general disorganization and a lack of urgency among the project managers.¹³³ By 1950, it was also becoming clear that the modest functionality of the T-series could not satisfy the propagandistic needs of the party leader-

ship. The August 1951 announcement of the plan for Nová Ostrava marked a turning point for architecture in Ostrava and all of Czechoslovakia.

Vladimír Meduna, the ambitious young Stalinist architect from Stavo-projekt in Ostrava, led the design team. In an article for *Architektura ČSR*, Meduna systematically laid out the argument for Nová Ostrava with exaggerated Marxist-Leninist rhetoric and absolute praise for the Soviet Union. He began with a short history of the housing problem in the city and described the image of Ostrava in 1951 as “a tangle of factories, railway cars and workers’ colonies heaped up in a mess, smothered by clouds of smoke and dust without a trace of greenery or freshness.” This was what “capitalism did to Ostrava” and now “through the building of socialism [the city] is the focal point of the whole republic.” Meduna stressed that Nová Ostrava was not only an economic endeavor but also “a creative plan, a plan of beauty, of a serene environment for the working man living in the city.”¹³⁴ The site had been selected because of its proximity to industries such as the Vítkovice Iron Works, and the ground had been tested to make sure that there were no valuable coal deposits underneath the proposed settlement area.¹³⁵ Nearby towns such as Karviná had suffered serious damage when buildings and roads sank because mining operations had left the ground unstable.¹³⁶

Designed to last for “many centuries and thousands of years,” the project for Nová Ostrava attempted to create a European capital on a tabula rasa site.¹³⁷ The landscape was imagined in grandiose terms. The site would be terraced to rise 20 meters above the Oder River valley to the west, and then the city would sit along the banks of a new canal built to connect the Oder to a tributary of the Danube River 100 kilometers away (fig. 3.33). Meduna described how the 40-meter-wide canal would widen to 120 meters in the center of the city, where the silhouette of the monumental buildings would reflect off the surface like “a mirror in the water.”¹³⁸ Habsburg nobles first proposed the project for the Oder-Danube Canal in the seventeenth century. The idea was resurrected by Hitler during the war and then again at the start of the Communist era, when the government was looking for ways to move goods quickly around the region.¹³⁹ No more than a few miles of the canal were ever built, and Ostrava’s riverfront failed to materialize.¹⁴⁰ Despite the missing canal, the street along the southwestern edge of the neighborhood was still named “Embankment,” showing something of the optimistic character of the period.

The first designs for Nová Ostrava, published with Meduna’s essay in *Architektura ČSR*, showed a monumental project at the inhuman scale characteristic of Soviet socialist realist projects (fig. 3.34). At the center of the expansive master plan was an administrative building designed to look like one of the wedding-cake towers in Moscow. It sat at the end of long street axis,



FIG. 3.33. DETAIL OF NOVÁ SOCIALISTICKÁ OSTRAVA, 1952.

FIG. 3.34. VLADIMÍR MEDUNA AND TEAM, PERSPECTIVE OF SVINOV SQUARE IN NOVÁ OSTRAVA, 1951.



FIG. 3.35. ST. MIKULÁŠ CHURCH, 1788–1791, PORUBA. A CHURCH WAS ON THIS LAND AS EARLY AS THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY.



FIG. 3.36. THE VILLAGE BEFORE CONSTRUCTION OF PORUBA.

80 meters (262 feet) wide, and was flanked by palace-like apartment buildings. In comparison, Meduna noted that Wenceslas Square in Prague was only 66 meters (216 feet) wide.¹⁴¹ Throughout the text, he stressed the benefits of the development's large size and careful planning. Infrastructure such as public transportation to and from local industrial enterprises would be more cost-effective and efficient in a large development than in multiple smaller settlements, a model preferred in the interwar period. In addition to the monumental primary axis in the central district, the site would have three additional residential neighborhoods separated from each other by green zones and wide avenues. Most of the apartment blocks in each of the four neighborhoods were organized around courtyards with shared open spaces. As the project developed, its size was scaled down and only two of the four neighborhoods were pursued, although Nová Ostrava remained larger in scope than all other housing projects in Czechoslovakia at the time.¹⁴²

Construction began with the first district, which in the original design was the location of the waterfront and the large administrative building. From the start, one obstacle to the fulfillment of the master plan was the existing condition of the site. A baroque manor house, church, and small village had been on the land since the late eighteenth century (figs. 3.35 and 3.36). In 1948, miners' cottages were built nearby after a new tramline began service in the area.¹⁴³ Then, in 1949, larger buildings intended to house addition-



FIG. 3.37. PORUBA STREET, FILLED WITH MOVING TRUCKS. THE *OBLOUK*, OR ARCH-SHAPED APARTMENT BUILDING, CAN BE SEEN UNDER CONSTRUCTION IN THE BACKGROUND, C. 1954.

FIG. 3.38. T12 BLOCKS IN PORUBA, 2006.

FIG. 3.39. PORUBA'S T-SERIES AND FIRST DISTRICT BUILDINGS, C. 1960. ON THE LEFT SIDE, THE EARLY T-SERIES BUILDINGS IN PARALLEL ROWS CAN BE SEEN BEHIND THE LATER T-SERIES BUILDINGS IN COURTYARD CONFIGURATIONS.

al workers were planned for the site; these structures were completed in the early 1950s with T-series buildings, most of which were organized in parallel rows (fig. 3.37). The rows stepped up the face of the hillside to take advantage of the natural slope of the site and gain more light and air for the apartments (fig. 3.38). One group in the northeast quadrant of the site took on the courtyard configuration of the later Nová Ostrava master plan. Likely built after 1951, this set of buildings offers evidence of how changing ideas were implemented incrementally: existing standardized housing blocks were arranged in the new urban configuration and then new types were developed to accommodate evolving goals for the urban environment (fig. 3.39).

Meduna and his team decided to wrap the first district around this existing development of T12 blocks and along the edge of the land occupied by the cottages, church, and manor house. Meduna created several new spatial nodes and a hierarchy of wide and narrow streets to deemphasize the existing buildings as elements of his organizing strategy. He laid out the new master plan on a grid running at a 45-degree angle to the rows of T-series buildings and counter to the curve of the main village street. Conceptually, Meduna began with the *oblouk*, a large curved apartment building, half-circle in plan, with a tall tower at its western end and two large archways cut into its façade to allow traffic to pass under and through the building along the existing roads (figs. 3.40 and 3.41). The *oblouk* (a word that means arch in Czech) functioned as a monumental gateway to the neighborhood while masking the rows of T-series buildings and the village behind it (figs. 3.42 and 3.43). In plan, it also rationalized the relationship of the 45-degree angle of the existing street with the new edge of the Poruba master plan (fig. 3.44). This was achieved in part by using small connector buildings that were added to the standardized blocks to attach the eastern end of the half-circle to the façade of the southernmost T-block and to connect the new row of apartment blocks along the “Embankment” to the back of the *oblouk* just to the north of the tower (figs. 3.45 and 3.46).

As an object, the *oblouk* strongly expressed a change in architectural method from the T-series of the early Stavoprojekt years. It was a unique, site-specific design, many times larger than any of the standardized projects from 1950, and adorned with arches, sgraffito panels, and a series of pilasters from the third to fourth floors and again between the cornice and roof. Over the central archway was a sculptural group in the classical tradition of pediment ornamentation, although these figures were miners with their families, complete with work clothes, a bicycle, a dog, and a wreath with a union symbol (fig. 3.47). The scene was not far from everyday life for the locals in the 1950s as seen in a snapshot of a crew with their bicycles in front of the Dukla Mine in the same era (fig. 3.48).



FIG. 3.40. AERIAL VIEW OF FIRST DISTRICT, WITH THE OBLOUK IN THE FOREGROUND, C. 1956.

FIG. 3.41. EVŽEN STEFLÍČEK AND MIROSLAV MATIOVSKÝ, OBLOUK IN PORUBA, 1953–1954.

FIG. 3.42. VIEW THROUGH THE OBLOUK TOWARD THE PORUBA STREET TOWER, 2006.

FIG. 3.43. PORUBA STREET AND THE OBLOUK, C. 1954.

Martin Strakoš has noted that Meduna did not create this form on his own. Instead, he copied the design from a Russian example by K.I. Rossi: the nineteenth-century General Staff Arch on Palace Square in St. Petersburg.¹⁴⁴ Like Meduna's project, the Russian example was referred to in Czech as an *oblouk*. Although Meduna had not traveled to the Soviet Union, the project was shown in the 1949 exhibition, "The Architecture of the Nations of the Soviet Union from the Distant Past to the Building of the Socialist Present," and illustrated in the accompanying exhibition catalogue of the same name (fig. 3.49).¹⁴⁵ Meduna borrowed not only the shape of the building but also the scale and placement of the sculptural reliefs over the central opening and the coffer detail



FIG. 3.44. MAP OF THE FIRST AND SECOND DISTRICTS IN PORUBA, 1958.

FIG. 3.45. VIEW FROM THE OBLOUK TOWER LOOKING UP PORUBA STREET. THE CONNECTION BETWEEN THE BUILDINGS ON THE EMBANKMENT CAN BE SEEN IN THE SHADOWED SECTION OF THE IMAGE, C. 1954.

FIG. 3.46. CONNECTION BETWEEN THE SOUTHERNMOST T12 BLOCK AND THE EASTERN CORNER OF THE OBLOUK, PORUBA, 2006.

FIG. 3.47. PEDIMENT SCULPTURE ON THE OBLOUK, PORUBA, 2006.



FIG. 3.48. CREW AT THE DUKLA MINE IN OSTRAVA, AS SHOWN IN *OSTRAVSKO VČERA A DNES* (1954).



FIG. 3.49. K. I. ROSSI, GENERAL STAFF ARCH, ST. PETERSBURG, RUSSIA, 1819–1829 AS SHOWN IN CATALOGUE (1949).



FIG. 3.50. PREPARATION OF THE BUILDING SITE FOR THE OBLOUK, PORUBA. THE ROAD SIGNS ARE COMMEMORATING OSTRAVA'S LIBERATION BY THE SOVIET ARMY, AND THE VILLAGE CHURCH IS VISIBLE ON THE LEFT, C. 1953.

within the archway, which was repeated throughout the neighborhood. A Russian example may also have been the model for the unusual asymmetrical tower, which was similar in scale and urban presence to St. Petersburg spires such as the Admiralty and St. Peter and Paul's Cathedral.¹⁴⁶ The choice of location for the tower, at the extreme east end of the half-circle, also served another purpose—to hide the nearby church spire from view when entering into the settlement, as can be seen in a photograph of the building site (fig. 3.50).

The second organizing feature of the site was the central boulevard, called Lenin Street (now Main Street), which was the monumental axis in Meduna's master plan. In order to bring people from the oblouk to the center of the neigh-



FIG. 3.51. BORIS JELČANINOV AND BRONISLAV FIRLA, TOWER ON PORUBA STREET UNDER CONSTRUCTION, C. 1953.

FIG. 3.52. TOWER ON PORUBA STREET, 1954.

FIG. 3.53. TOWER ON PORUBA STREET, 2006.

FIG. 3.54. SCHWARZENBERG PALACE IN THE CASTLE DISTRICT, PRAGUE, 1560S, AS SHOWN IN *ARCHITEKTURA ČSR* (1952).

borhood, they passed under the oblouk's central opening on Poruba Street, following the diagonal of the T12 rows, to the intersection with the new street grid at the top of the slope. This change in direction was marked by another distinctive residential tower designed by Boris Jelčaninov and Bronislav Firla from the Stavoprojekt office in Ostrava (figs. 3.51–3.53).¹⁴⁷ The tall, boxy design with its decorative pediments was modeled on Prague precedents, including Renaissance-era buildings from the Castle district and the neo-Renaissance U Lhotů Building on Wenceslas Square from the late nineteenth century



FIG. 3.55. LENIN STREET, LOOKING WEST FROM ALŠOVO SQUARE, IN THE 1960S.

FIG. 3.56. INTERSECTION OF PORUBA STREET AND MAIN STREET (FORMERLY LENIN STREET) WITH SHADED WALKING PATH IN THE CENTER OF MAIN STREET, 2008.

(fig. 3.54).¹⁴⁸ The overpowering visual connection from the obelisk to the apartment tower deemphasized the presence of the T12 blocks, which visually and experientially disappear into the space between these two nodes.

Beyond the tower was the center of Poruba, where Lenin Street and Poruba Street crossed at a large traffic circle. Jelčaninov designed the monumental apartment buildings along Lenin Street, which he decorated with multistory columns, ornamental balconies, and giant archways leading to small residential streets and courtyards (figs. 3.55 and 3.56).¹⁴⁹ The first district was to the



FIG. 3.57. ARCHWAY ON MAIN STREET IN PORUBA, WITH SECOND DISTRICT HIGH-RISE TOWER IN THE BACKGROUND, 2006.

southwest of Lenin Street and the second, only partially completed according to the original master plan, to the northeast. Like its Soviet exemplars, the scale and style of Lenin Street as imagined in Meduna's renderings and achieved with Jelčaninov's façade designs attempted to evoke the classical ambience of boulevards in the great European capitals, such as the Champs Elysées in Paris (fig. 3.57).¹⁵⁰

Unlike these precedents, however, the neighborhood of Poruba as a built space was scaled to the pedestrian. There were shops and restaurants lining the ground floors of the apartment buildings along Lenin Street (fig. 3.58). Walking paths, nestled among the buildings and accessed from openings along the streets, pass under the apartment buildings into parklike interior courtyards (fig. 3.59). The buildings' decorative details, created with the plaster technique called sgraffito that was popular in the sixteenth century,



FIG. 3.58. SHOPS ALONG MAIN STREET, PORUBA, 2006.



FIG. 3.59. COURTYARD AND PATHWAY IN THE FIRST DISTRICT, PORUBA, 2006.



FIG. 3.60. ARTISAN WORKING ON SGRAFFITO PANEL IN PORUBA, C. 1955.



FIG. 3.61. SGRAFFITO DESIGNS OF CHILDREN ON THE PORUBA STREET TOWER, 2006.

included folksy floral and animal patterns as well as images of smiling workers, happy children, and babies.¹⁵¹ Artisans and members of work brigades were trained in the technique, which was used for murals, ceiling panels, and ornamentation on the blank façades of the apartment buildings. Because of its association with the Czech national style and the fact that motifs could be adapted for a particular site, sgraffito was well suited for use on Sorela buildings (figs. 3.60 and 3.61). Sculptures were also commissioned for the public spaces in the neighborhood, and, rather than classical nude figures, the series featured miners and other industrial workers dressed in their professional clothing and holding the tools of their trade.¹⁵² One of the most visible is the statue of a coke plant worker along Lenin Street (fig. 3.62).

Like many socialist neighborhoods across the region, the buildings were arranged in ensembles around courtyards. Each set was designed by a different team of architects, although all worked from the standardized types in the Stavoprojekt guides. In 1952, Václav Hlinský, one of the architects of the Collective House in Litvínov who worked at Stavoprojekt in Prague, designed a T-series block on the Embankment just past the oblouk (fig. 3.63). Following the Lakomý formulation of simple and economic ornament derived from national sources, he designed the buildings with decoration only along the top story and in a passageway through the center block (fig. 3.64). Karel Prager, a young graduate of the Technical University in Prague who worked at Stavoprojekt in



FIG. 3.62. SCULPTURE OF COKE PLANT WORKER ALONG MAIN STREET, PORUBA, 2008.



FIG. 3.63. VÁCLAV HILSKÝ, T-SERIES APARTMENT BLOCK ON THE EMBANKMENT, PORUBA, 1953–1954.



FIG. 3.64. INTERIOR COURTYARD OF HILSKÝ-DESIGNED APARTMENT BLOCK, LOOKING THROUGH TO THE EMBANKMENT, PORUBA, 2006.



FIG. 3.65. SGRAFFITO ON CEILING OF PASSAGEWAY THROUGH THE PRAGER-DESIGNED BLOCK, PORUBA, 2006.

Prague and would be an influential modernist in the 1960s, designed a building ensemble on Builder Street, one block behind the Embankment, with a wide, ornately embellished passageway from the street into the courtyard (fig. 3.65). Like other Poruba examples, the motifs in the first-district buildings derived from Renaissance-era buildings in Prague, and many pieces were prefabricated and attached to the standardized buildings. Entrances to the stairwells leading to individual apartments were sometimes on the courtyard side, rather the street side of the buildings, to create a sense of privacy and community within each ensemble. Today, people still gather in these courtyards, which have grown into lush green spaces with playgrounds and seating areas (fig. 3.66).

The ensemble was a feature of socialist architecture that developed from the European classical tradition and, in the Soviet case, directly from the



FIG. 3.66. APARTMENT BLOCK COURTYARD IN THE FIRST DISTRICT, PORUBA, 2006.

nineteenth-century architecture of St. Petersburg. As Eve Blau writes in her study of the architecture of “Red Vienna” from the 1920s, variations on the perimeter block, the primary component of ensembles, were popular not only among nineteenth-century neoclassicists but also modern architects working in Central European cities between the wars.¹⁵³ In its urban sensibility if not its decorative style, Poruba’s urban scheme was connected to famous Viennese projects like the buildings in the Winarskyhof complex (1923–1926) and Karl Ehn’s Karl-Marx-Hof from 1926–1930. Like these projects, Poruba had a strong street wall, a hierarchy of spatial nodes, parklike courtyards entered through openings in the buildings, and apartment blocks that spanned more than a city block, a type that Blau calls the “superblock” (fig. 3.67).¹⁵⁴

Blau’s description of the spaces of Karl-Marx-Hof is equally apt for describing the experience of walking through Poruba’s first and second dis-



FIG. 3.67. AERIAL VIEW OF PORUBA, C. 1960.

tricts: “its spatial order is characterized by a subtle interpenetration of public, private, and communal space that not only allows for the fluid passage between city and *Hof* but also puts special emphasis on the points of intersection between them.”¹⁵⁵ Unlike the Viennese examples, however, Poruba was not built as infill into an existing urban fabric but as a new city on a cleared site. This meant that the hierarchy of spaces, from the entry point at the obelisk to the prominent intersection of Poruba and Lenin streets and into the shared courtyards and private apartments of the blocks, had to create its own sense of spatial tension that the Viennese examples gained from the intersection of old and new. This spatial tension was achieved, in part, by having multiple teams of architects work on sets of buildings within the master plan, a strategy similar to that used for the smaller scale Winarskyhof, designed by nine architects working on a three-block site.¹⁵⁶ Although all of the Stavoprojekt teams worked from standardized building types, there was a sense of individuality about the blocks, which confirms Radomíra Sedláková’s statement in her study on Sorela, that this was a period when “the typification guide was comprehensive[;] architects could compose housing types relative-



FIG. 3.68. VIEW ALONG THE EMBANKMENT TOWARD THE OBLOUK, PORUBA, C. 1956.

ly freely from it and work with them creatively on projects for new residential ensembles.”¹⁵⁷

In the Soviet context, Groys describes the ensemble as a feature of Soviet urbanism that attempted to create “a constructed totality,” one that emphasized each building’s inability to be a totality in and of itself and that could be achieved only through the “ensemble.”¹⁵⁸ Catherine Cooke also writes about the experiential qualities of ensembles: “The Soviet city was a ‘radiant’ experience for the ordinary proletarian inhabitant because it provided the elevating and confidence-building experience of moving as ‘owner’ through a continuous planned hierarchy of ever-larger ensembles. They started from the harmoniously composed building in which he or she lived and extended out into the city and conceptually to the whole socialist world.”¹⁵⁹ In Ostrava, this logic extended only to the boundaries of Poruba by the mid-1950s, but it was a new conception of urban space that distinguished socialist architecture from the haphazard development of the old city center eight kilometers away (fig. 3.68).

The “radiance” of the city was not only a theoretical concept but also part and parcel of the political message of the Stalinist period in Czechoslo-

vakia. Gustav Kliment, minister of heavy industry, described Nová Ostrava as the counterbalance to the extreme work environments around the city. At a time when most workers still lived in dire circumstances, the new city promised to be a reward for people's belief in the socialist cause. In a 1951 speech about building socialist cities, he said,

Black should remain underneath Ostrava, in the mines, chemical plants, and machine shops—the places of work in Ostrava, but the apartments of Ostrava's workers and their children should not have to be black in the future. We don't want to have pit heads and blast furnaces in the middle of Ostrava's streets, next to apartments and cultural facilities. We don't want to have cables carrying baskets of coal above the heads of children playing. Therefore, for the future housing developments of Ostrava's workers, the Central Committee of the Communist Party chose land relatively far from industrial enterprises, pretty land, in the picturesque countryside, surrounded by forests and in the same vicinity as the powerful future Hlučín dam, which together with the forest areas provide recreational offerings for the workers. Don't you want miners, who spend all day digging out coal without a ray of sunshine, to at least have enough sunlight in the hours that they have for a little bit of rest?¹⁶⁰

In this way, the landscape and experience of Poruba were actively engaged with a dialectical worldview that required an opposition between work and home, between the darkness of the mine and the brightness of the city.

As a form of cultural production in a communist society, architecture could not be freed from this struggle. The socialist industrial city was the location of the economic base of Marxism-Leninism, and its residential and civic architecture was, therefore, part of its superstructure, an instrument through which the project of heavy industry was supported and promoted by keeping the workers content at home and productive in the factory. In its ability to project the "image" of the socialist future, architecture was also a physical manifestation of the success of the socialist system. In this way, the method of socialist realism, which produced Sorela in Czechoslovakia, was dependent and constitutive of the industrial project of Stalinism.

4 • A VISION OF SOCIALIST ARCHITECTURE

The Late Career of Jiří Kroha

The ethos of socialist work, of creative socialist people, is reflected in the socialist order and in socialist architecture...[buildings] appear today as indelible impressions on the people's consciousness, not only in the Soviet nations and the people's democracies but on all of the working strata and classes of other nations, who are becoming hopeful beacons of their own liberation. Jiří Kroha, 1952

Jiří Kroha was the most prolific and high-profile architect of the socialist realist period in Czechoslovakia. He is primarily remembered as a left-wing interwar modernist whose buildings can be found in Mladá Boleslav and the villa districts around Brno.¹ Many people do not know that the most active period of his career was between 1948 and 1956, when he was a prominent Communist and head of the only independent atelier within Stavoprojekt. In his role as Czechoslovakia's premier socialist designer, Kroha, along with his staff, completed diverse projects, including workers' clubs, university buildings, the renovation of Strahov Stadium for the 1955 Spartakiada, and several large housing developments.² The residential projects included the town of Nová Dubnica (New Dubnica) in Slovakia from 1951 and the second phase of the Model Housing Development in Ostrava from 1952. The atelier's design methods developed out of Kroha's desire to adapt Soviet socialist realism and Marxist-Leninist cultural models to the Czechoslovak context. As a body of work, the production of Kroha's atelier represented the most consistent and comprehensive engagement with socialist realism in Czechoslovakia.³

As a cultural figure, Kroha provides a rare opportunity for an in-depth study of the implementation of socialist realism in Czechoslovakia and the region. Unlike most of his contemporaries, he was a life-long Marxist-Leninist and devoted party member who saw the rise of the Communist Party as no less than the precursor to the development of a truly socialist society. From 1948 until the end of his atelier in 1956, he was one of the most spirited defenders of the new method in Czechoslovakia, but his idiosyncratic interpretation of the slogan “national in form, socialist in content” led him to design buildings that defied easy stylistic categorization. While most of his interwar counterparts held on to their preferences for modernist forms into the socialist period, Kroha transitioned smoothly from functionalism to a style that can be described as abstract classicism. He succeeded in balancing tensions between the regime’s desire to “sovietize” local culture and the more subtle project of defining a unique socialist architecture for Czechoslovakia, one that built on and, in some respects, transcended the modernist tradition while promising a brighter socialist future.⁴ Kroha’s work is best understood within conceptual frameworks, developed by scholars of Soviet socialist realism such as Boris Groys and Catherine Cooke, in which Marxism-Leninism, as propagated in the 1930s, is a tool for evaluating architectural production.

Kroha attained high status after 1948 because of his longtime affiliation with the Communist Party and his fervent public support for Soviet architecture as a model for Czechoslovakia.⁵ Starting as early as the summer of 1945, Kroha gave speeches at professional gatherings and published essays and projects in *Architektura ČSR* on socialist architecture and the need to find an architectural expression to match the “new social reality.”⁶ Kroha’s papers and office documents show his connections in the late 1940s and early 1950s to the leadership of the country’s Communist Party, including Zdeněk Nejedlý, minister of education, science, and art; Ladislav Štoll, a future minister of culture; Antonín Zapotocký, the prime minister; and Zdeněk Fierlinger, the deputy prime minister who personally visited the atelier in June 1952.⁷ Nejedlý was especially influential in making the case for socialist realism as a national expression.

During these years, Kroha was part of the country’s intellectual and cultural elite, with high-profile commissions, an apartment in Prague, a house in Brno, and a full-time chauffeur.⁸ Kroha maintained his privileged lifestyle through the early 1950s, even as some of his political allies were facing show trials and forced labor. He did not, however, survive the 1950s with his reputation intact. Like some other prominent longtime Communists, Kroha was eventually discredited and removed from his position when a denunciation letter from a disgruntled former employee initiated a year-long investigation into his professional conduct.

Kroha’s atelier was closed in July 1956, and he was forced to retire from

practice. Two years later, he was appointed as a consultant on preservation projects for the Ministry of Education and Culture.⁹ One year before his death in 1974, he published a history of the Soviet avant-garde in which he argued for a reevaluation of constructivism, functionalism, and socialist realism based on their levels of engagement with the social and material needs of all classes. In this framework, style was not an important category, but the failure of constructivism and functionalism to raise the living standard of the entire population was seen as a problem that only socialist realism could have corrected.¹⁰ The heavily illustrated book also gave Kroha and his collaborator, Jiří Hruža, the opportunity to publish hundreds of images and primary texts on Soviet architecture in the guise of a critique. Most importantly, the book was a thinly veiled explanation for Kroha's own professional choices as he progressed from functionalism to socialist realism in the 1940s.

In the trajectory of Kroha's career, the late 1940s and early 1950s represented the fulfillment of his desire for a socialist society and the opportunity to lead the profession toward a new era of architecture. With the support of the leadership of the Communist Party and a staff that grew to almost eighty employees by 1955, Kroha was the country's most publicized and powerful individual architect of the period.¹¹ Despite this, Kroha was increasingly disillusioned with the direction of architecture after Stalin's death in 1953. Documentation from the 1955–1956 investigation into practices at the atelier revealed Kroha's arrogance in the face of questions about his professional conduct and mounting anger toward his critics.¹²

The closure of the atelier and Kroha's disappearance from the pages of *Architektura ČSR* were not, however, only about his design choices or personal behavior. In 1956, a conceptual and organizational transformation was taking place within the ministries and Stavoprojekt as technocrats in the government regained some of the power they had lost during the most dogmatic years of Stalinist appeasement. Khrushchev's February 1956 "Secret Speech" criticized the "cult of personality" around Stalin and encouraged the Soviet leadership to refocus their attention on the collective good of the party.¹³ Although the Czechoslovak response to Khrushchev's reforms has been judged as relatively weak in comparison to those of Poland and Hungary, where mass uprisings led to changes in national leadership, a closer look shows that the Prague regime was not immune to popular demands for reform.¹⁴ Unlike countries where people took to the streets, in Czechoslovakia the changes came from within the government through ministerial realignments and new degrees of freedom from official discourse in cultural production. In this context, Kroha's atelier represented the old order—a remnant of the Stalinist penchant for personality cults and proof to those around him of the danger of elevating an individual above the collective.

Kroha's career as a socialist designer started long before the Communist takeover in 1948. Born in Prague in 1893, Kroha enrolled in 1911 at the Technical University in Prague, where he studied through the start of the war, finally graduating in 1918.¹⁵ Like other young architects of his generation, Kroha was first drawn to Czech cubism, a movement unique to the Czech lands in the 1910s and one that drew from and expanded on the ideas of French cubism (fig. 4.1).¹⁶ He built kinetic stage sets for avant-garde theater productions, including *Matěj Poctivý* (Honest Matthew) by Ladislav Klíma and Arnošt Dvořák in 1922; he also designed the cover of the book *Matěj Poctivý* when it was published (fig. 4.2).¹⁷ In the early 1920s, German expressionism influenced his style, as seen in his best known building, the Technical School in Mladá Boleslav, designed in 1923 (fig. 4.3). In 1925, he was appointed professor at the Brno University of Technology, in the country's second largest city, which was experiencing an economic and cultural boom at the time. As the plasticity of cubism and expressionism in Czechoslovak architecture gave way to Western European- and Soviet-inspired functionalism, Kroha transitioned to a more stripped-down Corbusian modernist style for projects such as his family's home in Brno, from 1928–1929 (fig. 4.4). During this time, he was part of an exceptional flowering of modern architecture in the city that paralleled its overall growth. Brno is the site of Mies van der Rohe's 1929 Tugendhat House and numerous other modernist projects of exceptional quality by Czech architects, including Kroha, Bohuslav Fuchs, Bedřich Rozehnal, and Arnošt Wiesner.¹⁸ Fuchs and Wiesner's Moravian Bank, on the city's main square, was a prominent example (fig. 4.5).

After some early interest in socialist activities in Prague, such as directing and staging the play *Nová Orestia* (New Orestia) in 1923, Kroha became increasingly active in the Communist Party and a devotee of Marxism-Leninism.¹⁹ Influenced by the effects of the worldwide depression and his interactions with leftist circles in Brno, he traveled to the Soviet Union in 1930. The same year, Kroha joined the Brno section of the Left Front (Levá fronta) and then cofounded the Union of Socialist Architects (Svaz socialistických architektů) in 1933, serving as the group's president through the 1930s and again after it regrouped in 1945.²⁰ One of his primary interests at the time was housing. In his 1930–1932 illustrated series entitled *Sociologický fragment bydlení* (The Sociological Housing Fragment), Kroha took aim at the capitalist class structure, comparing the struggle of lower classes with the living conditions of the bourgeoisie through a montage of graphics, photos, and text.²¹ During the 1930s, he gained a reputation for his knowledge of Marx, Engels, and Marxist-Leninism, teaching popular university seminars on Marxism and architecture.²² Between 1930 and 1933, he also gave more than two hundred public lectures to local workers,

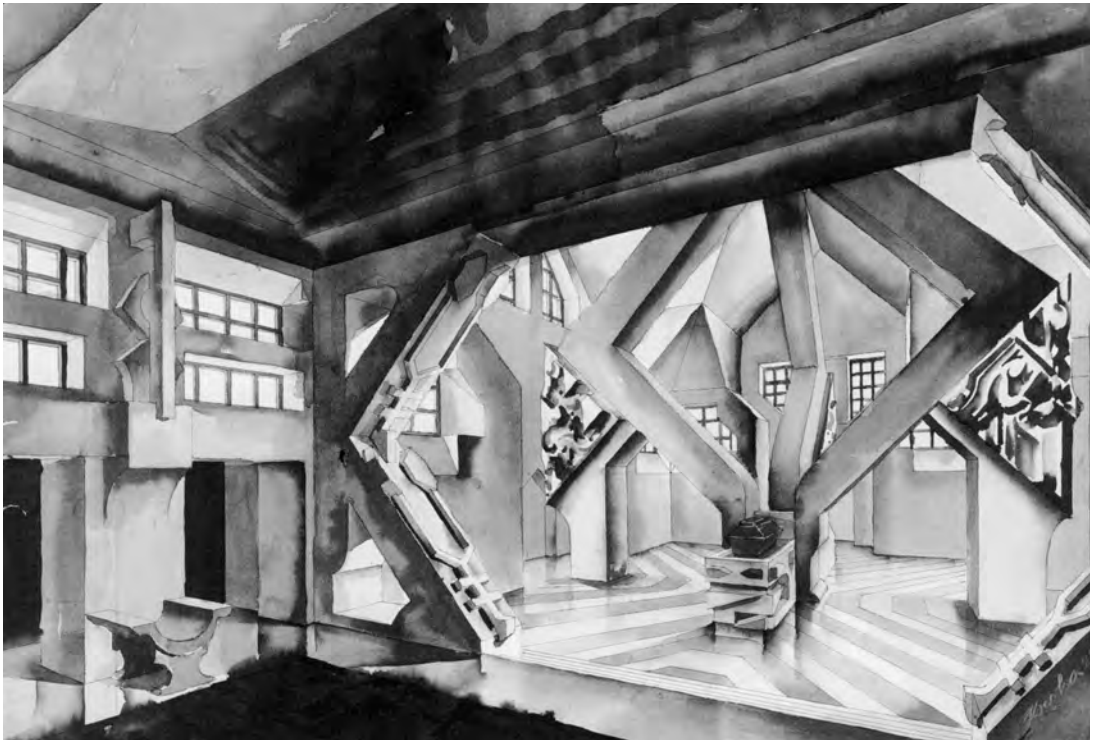


FIG. 4.1. JIŘÍ KROHA, PROJECT FOR A CREMATORIUM, PARDUBICE, 1919–1920.

FIG. 4.2. JIŘÍ KROHA'S COVER DESIGN FOR *MATĚJ POCTIVÝ* (1923), A PLAY BY LADISLAV KLÍMA AND ARNOŠT DVOŘÁK.

FIG. 4.3. JIŘÍ KROHA, TECHNICAL SCHOOL, MLADÁ BOLESLAV, 1923–1927.



FIG. 4.4. JIŘÍ KROHA, KROHA FAMILY HOME, BRNO, 1928–1929.



FIG. 4.5. BOHUSLAV FUCHS AND ARNOŠT WIESNER, MORAVIAN BANK, BRNO, 1929–1930.

farmers, schoolteachers, and teenagers on topics such as living a socialist life, the educational system, and Soviet successes in “the fields of culture, art, and technology.”²³

In early 1934, in an event that foreshadowed Kroha’s later political troubles, he was denounced by a man who attended one of his public lectures on the Soviet system. After two trials, he was fined and sentenced to three months in prison for propagandizing for the Soviet Union.²⁴ Although he never served the sentence and was granted amnesty in 1936, he lost his position at the Brno University of Technology for almost three years.²⁵ He was not allowed to return to his post until 1937, after local and international supporters pressured the university; those writing on his behalf included a group of ten French architects, among them Le Corbusier, Pierre Chareau, André Lurçat, and Auguste Perret.²⁶

During this period away from the university, Kroha published a book that looked at debates about collective housing in the Soviet Union.²⁷ As architectural historian Klaus Spechtenhauser writes, the book “is probably the most substantial attempt at that time to clarify the reason for the early collapse of modern architecture in the Soviet Union,” pointing as it does to factors such as “the superficial application of modern building forms, disregard of climatic conditions, insufficient material resources and obsolete technology, unfinished construction of collective housing districts, or unreasonable expectations.”²⁸ Kroha himself never actively advocated for collective living



FIG. 4.6. JIŘÍ KROHA, VILÉM KUBA, AND JOSEF POLÁŠEK, APARTMENT BUILDINGS FOR THE CITY OF BRNO, 1946–1948.

arrangements, although he was a strong supporter of the minimum dwelling proposals that came from CIAM and local avant-garde groups in the 1930s.²⁹

At the start of the Nazi occupation in 1939, Kroha's public support for Marxism-Leninism and the Soviet Union brought him further negative attention, and he was sent to concentration camps for political prisoners from 1939 to 1940. Like many architects who suffered during the war, Kroha became even more dedicated to the socialist cause and the Communist Party after 1945. His path from university professor in Brno to the regime's favored architect followed patterns of Communist control and institutional reorganization in the late 1940s. Immediately after the war, Kroha resumed his position as president of the Union of Socialist Architects and played a role in the creation of the Block of Progressive Architectural Associations (Blok architektonických prokrokových spolků, or BAPS) in 1945.

In these early postwar years, Kroha remained on the faculty at the Brno University of Technology and served as chair of the Department of Architecture from 1946 to 1948.³⁰ He also completed a few projects, including a group of rental apartment buildings in Brno that had been commissioned by the city and designed by Kroha, Vilém Kuba, and Josef Polášek (fig. 4.6).³¹ He also completed a community center in Mnich near Kamenice nad Lipou that shared some details and spatial configurations with his school in Mladá Boleslav.³² Around Brno, Kroha continued to build his reputation as a supporter of the Soviet system and an authority on socialist design methods

through university lectures, articles in newspapers such as the local daily, *Rovnost* (Equality), and radio addresses for Český rozhlas (Czech Radio).³³ Kroha remained president of the Union of Socialist Architects, although from his home in Brno he was not actively involved in the day-to-day operations in Prague. His national profile among architects seemed to diminish, however, and he did not publish any articles or projects in *Architektura ČSR* from early 1946 until 1948.

The turning point in Kroha's career was a November 1947 commission from the Communist minister of agriculture, Július Ďuriš, for the Slavic Agricultural Exhibition being planned for spring 1948. Almost twenty years earlier, Kroha had designed two pavilions at the 1928 Exhibition of Contemporary Culture in Brno, a national celebration of the country's first ten years.³⁴ His return to exhibition design coincided with the Communist Party's promotion of a "national road to socialism" and its attempt to connect itself with symbols of the country's past, including the nineteenth-century Prague Exhibition Grounds—the site of the 1891 Jubilee Celebration and the location of the 1948 event.

Just as the 1928 exhibition had introduced modern architecture to a mass audience, the 1948 Slavic Agricultural Exhibition in Prague was the first opportunity for Czechs and Slovaks to see the artistic method known in the Soviet Union as socialist realism, although Kroha's interpretation had a decidedly Czechoslovak flavor that was quite different from its Soviet equivalent.³⁵ Kroha, head project architect Čeněk Vorel, who would later work on the project for Nová Ostrava, and a team of more than one hundred apprentice architects, painters, sculptors, and university students worked together to transform the venue's historic art nouveau pavilions into showcases for the agricultural sector. Exhibits had themes such as farming, forestry, livestock production, fishing, rural life, and a "pantheon" of great agriculturalists (figs. 4.7 and 4.8).³⁶ Executed in a flamboyant and optimistic style, the exhibition evoked not only the figural qualities of Soviet socialist realism, with its romanticization of workers' muscular bodies and quaint peasant garb, but also the fluid lines, bright colors, and amorphous shapes of interwar expressionism and Kroha's own early work (figs. 4.9 and 4.10). After six months of planning, the exhibition opened just over two months after the Communist Party took control of the government. As a sign of his growing political prominence, Kroha appeared at the event with Klement Gottwald, the president and Communist Party leader, and Prime Minister Antonín Zapotocký (fig. 4.11). The fortuitous timing of the exhibition solidified Kroha's reputation as the country's first socialist realist designer and gave him an instant national profile after years of working in Brno and other smaller cities.



FIG. 4.7. JIŘÍ KROHA AND THE ATELIER OF NATIONAL ARTIST JIŘÍ KROHA, EXHIBITION OF COUNTRY WOMEN, SLAVIC AGRICULTURAL EXHIBITION, PRAGUE, 1948.

FIG. 4.8. PAINTERS AT THE SLAVIC AGRICULTURAL EXHIBITION, PRAGUE, 1948.

FIG. 4.9. DESIGN FOR THE HALL OF INDUSTRY, SLAVIC AGRICULTURAL EXHIBITION, PRAGUE, 1948.

FIG. 4.10. DESIGN FOR THE HALL OF AGRICULTURE, SLAVIC AGRICULTURAL EXHIBITION, PRAGUE, 1948.



FIG. 4.11. JIŘÍ KROHA (LEFT) SITTING WITH PRESIDENT AND PARTY LEADER KLEMENT GOTTWALD AND PRIME MINISTER ANTONÍN ZAPOTOCKÝ AT THE SLAVIC AGRICULTURAL EXHIBITION, PRAGUE, 1948.

THE ATELIER OF NATIONAL ARTIST JIŘÍ KROHA

With this success, Kroha quickly became the most vocal supporter of the “Soviet model” among architects in Czechoslovakia. A series of honors and rewards followed. In August 1948, he was bestowed with the official title “National Artist,” an honor held by no other living architect.³⁷ Soon after, he was promoted to rector at the Brno University of Technology, a post he held through the 1950 school year.³⁸ When Stavoprojekt was formed as an enterprise within the Czechoslovak Building Works in September 1948, Kroha was

granted special status to run his own office in Prague: the Atelier of National Artist Jiří Kroha (Atelier národního umělce Jiřího Krohy, or ANU). He was also appointed to head the Architectural Council of Stavoprojekt, a group established by the Union of Architects to protect the profession's interests as it transitioned to "collective work."³⁹

The Central Committee and the leadership of Stavoprojekt quickly accepted Kroha as the primary proponent of the regime's architectural propaganda. He gave the keynote address at the First Nationwide Meeting of the Heads of the Stavoprojekt Ateliers in January 1949, when he proclaimed that Stavoprojekt meant "the beginning of Czechoslovak socialist architecture."⁴⁰ Alongside similar polemics by other members of the editorial board of *Architektura ČSR*, Kroha began to regularly publish essays in which he systematically and repetitively formulated his program for "socialist" architecture. By 1956, he had more than a dozen feature articles to his credit.

At the core of Kroha's argument was the Marxist-Leninist base-and-superstructure model. Set out in the preface to Marx's *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy* from 1859, the concept has since become one of the best known and most contentious Marxist ideas. Although Marxist scholars continue to dispute the meaning of the passage describing this model, it was a central concept for Kroha, and therefore it is important to return directly to the text by Marx: "The sum total of these [definite] relations of production constitutes the economic structure of society—the real foundation, on which rises a legal and political superstructure and to which correspond particular forms of social consciousness.... With the change of the economic foundation, the entire immense superstructure is more or less rapidly transformed."⁴¹ Leszek Kołakowski, author of the classic volumes *Main Currents in Marxism*, describes the superstructure in the following way: "[The superstructure] includes all political institutions, especially the state, all organized religion, political associations, laws and customs, and finally human consciousness expressed in ideas about the world, religious beliefs, forms of artistic creation, and the doctrines of law, politics, philosophy, and morality. The principal tenet of historical materialism is that a particular technological level calls for particular relations of production and causes them to come about historically in the course of time. They in turn bring about a particular kind of superstructure."⁴² Following from this, Kroha proposed that, with the transition from capitalism to a planned economy in Czechoslovakia, there must be an associated transformation in the expression of the cultural superstructure.

Kroha argued that the socialist system could not adopt the forms of avant-garde modern architecture because these forms belonged to the superstructure of capitalism. In a 1949 article he wrote, "Today our Marxist-

Leninist teaching shows us directly in the field of the artistic creation, that art, as the cultural superstructure, is the superstructure over reality and that for cultural representation and the enabling of this reality, it is necessary at the very least to truly know this reality. Given that so many idealistic, intellectualized, and artistic paths ending in vague abstractions wanted simultaneously to be the expression of free artistic creation, it follows that these were not always the truth of reality. Marxism-Leninism teaches us that socialist art must be the true cultural superstructure over the socialist reality.”⁴³ The dialectic also framed many of his discussions about what this new expression might be, since he believed that “socialist” architecture could be achieved only through a struggle against cosmopolitanism and the “vulgar economic understanding” of architecture that was still prevalent in the late 1940s.⁴⁴ Political acceptance and a platform from which to publish did not translate, however, into professional respect, and Kroha’s rhetoric on socialist realism and the need for a new superstructure was largely ignored by architects at Stavoprojekt as late as 1950.

One reason may have been that Kroha’s writings in the 1940s and 1950s were repetitive and convoluted. Pavel Halík has gone so far as to say, “It is hard to imagine that anyone read all the way through these half-crazy Kroha texts[;] it is enough to consult a few passages to get a picture of what they mean. It is not even possible to quote from them, because in every phrase one gets wrapped up with terrible adjectives and superlatives. The sentences break down under their own weight and often they lose their meaning.” Halík points out that Kroha often put drawings and pictures of his unbuilt projects and finished buildings alongside texts that did not refer to the images at all. For him, this left the impression that the texts were vague exercises in political rhetoric that had little to do with architecture.⁴⁵ In a text on Kroha’s overall theoretical development, Dita Dvořáková writes that her work was hindered by his “politicization of subjects, accompanied by an incomprehensibility of published texts rendered in excited, emphatic terms, verging on the incoherent (the famous ‘Krohaic’ style).”⁴⁶

Without building projects or respect from the professional community, ANU focused primarily on political commissions in its first year. These included official exhibitions, monuments, and Communist Party events, including the Ninth Party Congress in May 1949, the pavilion for the Ministry of Agriculture at the 1949 exhibition titled “100 Years of Czech National Life” in Kroměříž (100 let českého národního života), the 1949 Prague exhibition “The Soviet Union Our Teacher, Our Brother” (Sovětský svaz náš učitel – náš bratr), and the design of the June 1950 “Exhibition of Southern Bohemia” (Výstava jižních Čech) in Soběslav (fig. 4.12).⁴⁷ He also submitted the third prize entry to the 1950 competition for the Stalin Monument in Prague with Zdeněk Pešánek

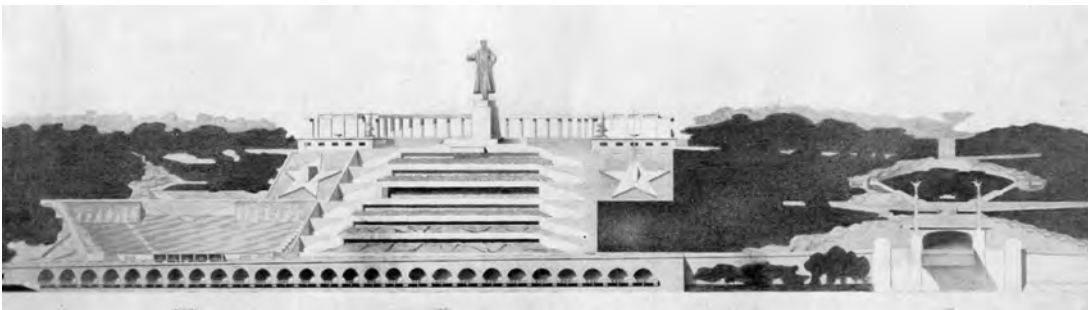


FIG. 4.12. JIŘÍ KROHA AND THE ATELIER OF NATIONAL ARTIST JIŘÍ KROHA, STAGE DESIGN FOR THE NINTH PARTY CONGRESS, 1949.

FIG. 4.13. KAREL POKORNÝ (SCULPTURE), JIŘÍ KROHA, ZDENĚK PEŠÁNEK (BASE AND SITE), PROJECT FOR THE STALIN MONUMENT IN PRAGUE, 1950.

and sculptor Karel Pokorný (fig. 4.13).⁴⁸ Each of the exhibition designs built on his work at the Slavic Agricultural Exhibition with nationally themed murals of workers and farmers, portraits of party leaders, slogans, sculptures, and large public spaces with vaulted roofs. Kroha became such a specialist in “socialist exhibition design” that he wrote an article on the subject for *Architektura ČSR* in 1950.⁴⁹ In the text, which used his project in Soběslav as its primary example, Kroha argued that exhibitions were one of the primary venues in which to educate the working class in the new ways of socialist living.



FIG. 4.14. OPENING OF THE EXHIBITION OF SOUTHERN BOHEMIA IN SOBĚSLAV IN JUNE 1950. JIŘÍ KROHA IS ON THE LEFT IN THE FRONT ROW. ALSO IN THIS PHOTO (BUT NOT SPECIFICALLY IDENTIFIED) ARE DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER ZDENĚK FIERLINGER, MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE JÚLIUS ĎURIŠ, AND MINISTER OF THE POST OFFICE ALOIS NEUMAN.

Through this work, Kroha remained intimately involved in the inner circles of the Communist Party. Minister of Agriculture Ďuriš commissioned the pavilion in Kroměříž and the exhibition in Soběslav, where Ďuriš was an honored guest at the opening, along with Deputy Prime Minister Fierlinger (fig. 4.14).⁵⁰ In a May 1949 letter to colleagues who had worked with him on the renovation of the Palace of Industry at the Prague Exhibition Grounds for the Ninth Party Congress, Kroha relayed congratulations for their good work “from the mouths of our leading comrades (Comrade President Gottwald, Comrade Ministers, and almost all of the members of the Central Committee).”⁵¹ During this period, the atelier grew; it had more than thirty employees by the end of 1949.⁵² Kroha began using the privileges that came with his position to write letters on behalf of friends and colleagues to help save their jobs, vouch for their political loyalties, increase their salaries, and, in one case, to keep an employee out of a labor camp.⁵³

In late 1949, Kroha also proposed a new building for the Departments of Architecture and Construction Engineering at the Brno University of Tech-

nology, where he was rector. The project, which was never built, had Kroha straddling the tenets of interwar modernism and the neoclassicism of Soviet designs. The H-shaped plan featured two bar buildings connected by a perpendicular centerpiece that housed the building's auditorium. The squared ends of the bar buildings were decorated with geometric window designs that highlighted a modernist play on ornament and structure (figs. 4.15 and 4.16). On the central axis of the front façade, two three-story-high columns are set into a boxy frame supporting a classical sculptural ensemble at the attic story. The building design was featured in *Architektura ČSR* in early 1950, and it was the first that Kroha published in the journal after February 1948.⁵⁴ It signaled his emerging presence as an architect rather than just an exhibition designer at the same time that cultural policies were becoming more stringent as the Soviets pressured the Czechoslovak regime to more openly adopt Soviet socialist realism in all sectors of artistic production.

The Brno project's publication also coincided with a change in ANU's relationship to Stavoprojekt. In its original configuration, ANU was "connected to the Czechoslovak Building Works in a special way" and Kroha's employees worked directly for the atelier.⁵⁵ He set employees' wages, which were typically higher than in other Stavoprojekt offices, and the design work was classified as "exceptional."⁵⁶ At the request of the minister of technology, ANU was reorganized as of January 1, 1950, and required to "join the socialist sector," transfer its employees to the Stavoprojekt payroll, and no longer act as "a private enterprise."⁵⁷ Some employees were transferred to other Stavoprojekt ateliers after their ANU exhibition projects ended.⁵⁸ Although the origins of the organizational change at ANU are unclear, it is likely that the ministry wanted more control over the atelier's projects, budget, and staff.

A few months after this change, ANU received its first commission for a large public building: the Morphology Pavilion at the Medical College of Palacký University in Olomouc, completed in 1961.⁵⁹ The new commission allowed Kroha to retain some of the staff scheduled to leave ANU, and by the summer of 1951, he was writing to his local national committee and the Stavoprojekt administration hoping to hire more employees.⁶⁰ As proposed, the primary floor plan for the Olomouc project was similar to the Brno design, with two parallel wings and a central perpendicular connector housing the auditorium (figs. 4.17 and 4.18).⁶¹ Unlike the simple, modern expression in Brno with long low lines, the central volume of the front wing in Olomouc rose five stories from the entry and the back wing rose seven. Although the design showed a definitive shift in his thinking, the project expressed a level of abstraction that set Kroha apart from his more dogmatic and conservative Russian counterparts of the early 1950s. The front façade was divided in the center by a single decorative column and capped by spires at each corner.

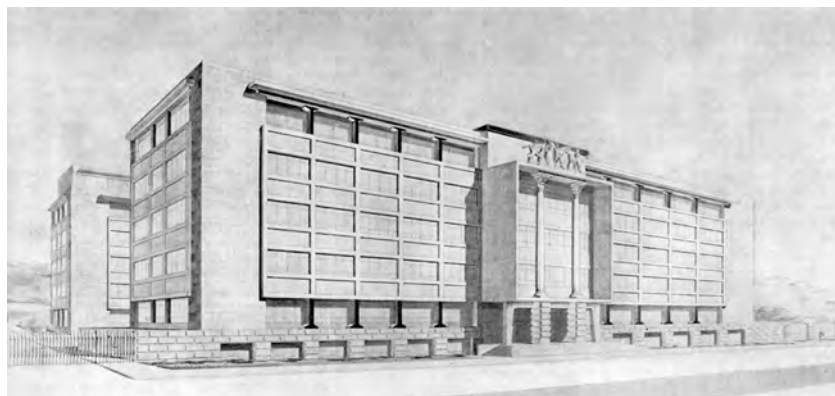
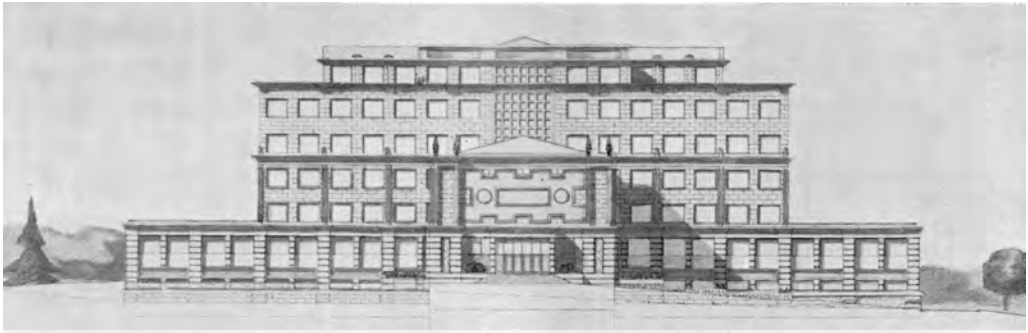


FIG. 4.15. JIŘÍ KROHA AND THE ATELIER OF NATIONAL ARTIST JIŘÍ KROHA, PROJECT FOR THE DEPARTMENTS OF ARCHITECTURE AND CONSTRUCTION ENGINEERING AT THE BRNO UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY, 1949.

FIG. 4.16. COURTYARD FOR THE DEPARTMENTS OF ARCHITECTURE AND CONSTRUCTION ENGINEERING AT THE BRNO UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY, 1949.

FIG. 4.17. DESIGN FOR THE MORPHOLOGY PAVILION AT THE MEDICAL COLLEGE OF PALACKÝ UNIVERSITY IN OLOMOUČ, 1951.



421 Národní umělec JIŘÍ KROHA: Návrh na morfologický pavilon lékařské fakulty v Olomouci; Hlavní průčelí 1. etapy. — Проект морфологического павильона медицинского факультета в Оломоуце. — Design of morphology pavilion of medical college at Olomouc. — *Projet de pavillon de morphologie de la faculté de médecine à Olomouc.*

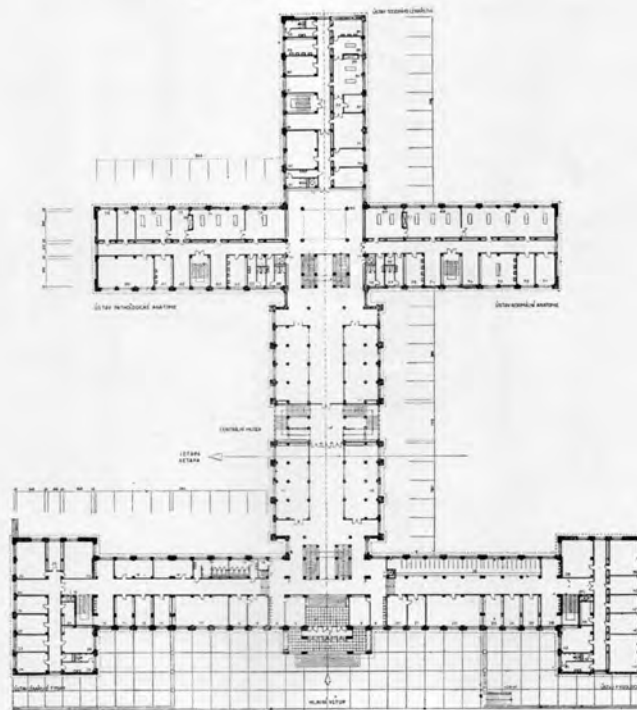
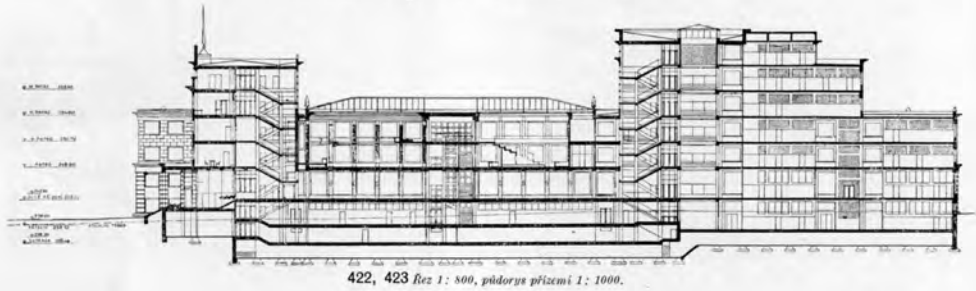


FIG. 4.18. JIŘÍ KROHA AND THE ATELIER OF NATIONAL ARTIST JIŘÍ KROHA, SECTION AND PLAN FOR THE MORPHOLOGY PAVILION AT THE MEDICAL COLLEGE OF PALACKÝ UNIVERSITY IN OLOMOUC, 1950–1961.



FIG. 4.19. ENTRANCE TO MORPHOLOGY PAVILION, OLOMOUC, 2008.



FIG. 4.20. HANDRAIL, INTERIOR OF THE MORPHOLOGY PAVILION, OLOMOUC, 2008.

A large floral ornament was placed over the main doorway at the roof level. The hierarchical volumes, rusticated base, and classical detailing indicated Kroha's transition from a hybrid modernism in Brno to what can be called abstract neoclassicism in the Olomouc project. As built, the pavilion is much different than the original proposal, with a low entrance and tall side wings (fig. 4.19). The interior, however, retained an elegant socialist realist decorative scheme, with a double-height colonnaded lobby, marble floors, custom light fixtures, and decorative handrails (fig. 4.20).

In early 1951, ANU was commissioned to design three workers' clubs for factories in Horní Suché, Petřvald, and Hrušov, all small villages in the industrial areas in and around Ostrava.⁶² Each of these "Houses of Culture" contained a theater, restaurant, bar, library, and meeting rooms. These more modest projects illustrated a further development in Kroha's socialist realist sensibility. The small clubs were variations on a standard plan, with simple windows, pitched roofs running from front to back, engaged pilasters, and a spire on the roof over the entrance. Colored renderings published in *Architektura ČSR* showed the largely masonry volumes enlivened with red and yellow paint, a landscaped plaza, decorative details such as a star pattern, and a large Czechoslovak flag flying from the spire on the roof (figs. 4.21–4.23).⁶³ The

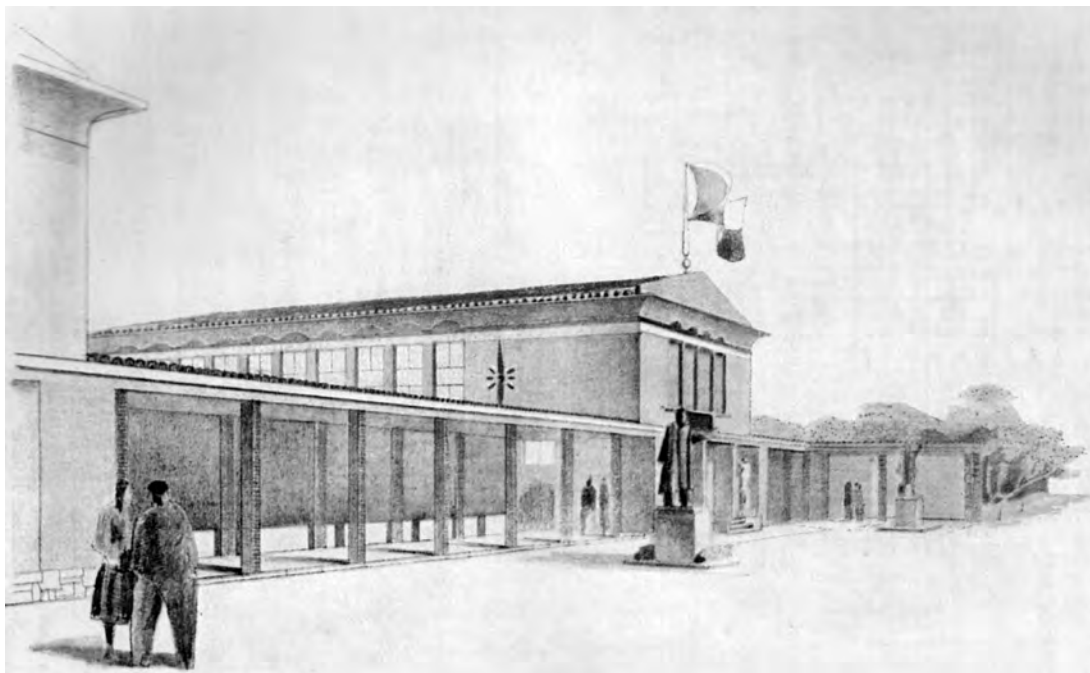


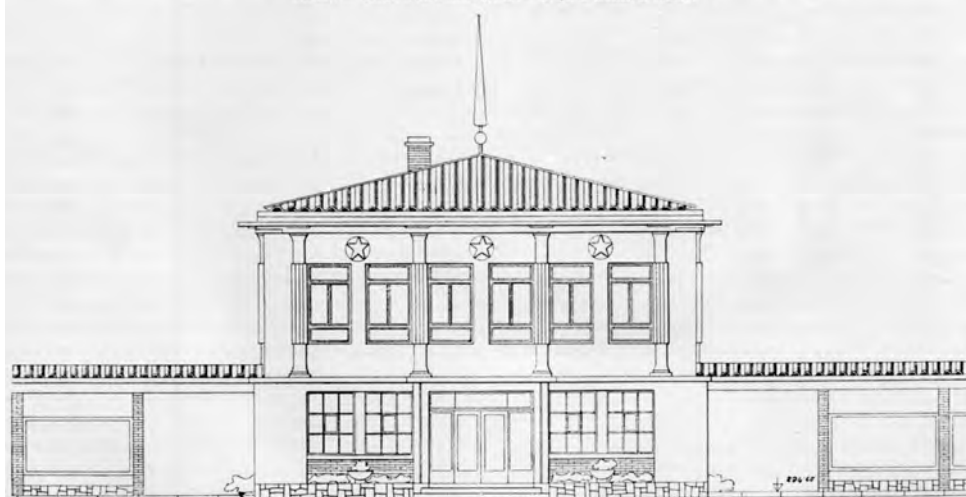
FIG. 4.21. JIŘÍ KROHA AND THE ATELIER OF NATIONAL ARTIST JIŘÍ KROHA, HOUSE OF CULTURE FOR PROGRESS MINE (DŮL POKROK), PETŘVALD, 1951.



FIG. 4.22. JIŘÍ KROHA AND THE ATELIER OF NATIONAL ARTIST JIŘÍ KROHA, HOUSE OF CULTURE FOR KLEMENT GOTTWALD MINE, HORNÍ SUCHÉ, 1951.



437 Národní umělec JIŘÍ KROHA: Návrh na osvětový dům dolu J. V. Stalina. Perspektiva. — Проект дома просвещения. — Design of the Culture House. — Projet de maison de culture.



438, 439 Vstupní průčelí 1 : 150 a boční průčelí 1 : 250.

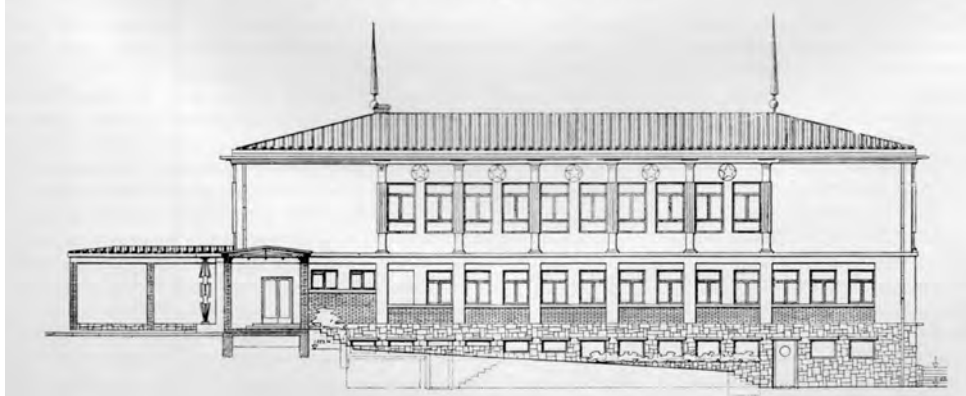


FIG. 4.23. JIŘÍ KROHA AND THE ATELIER OF NATIONAL ARTIST JIŘÍ KROHA, PERSPECTIVE AND ELEVATIONS FOR THE HOUSE OF CULTURE FOR J. V. STALIN MINE, HRUŠOV, 1951.

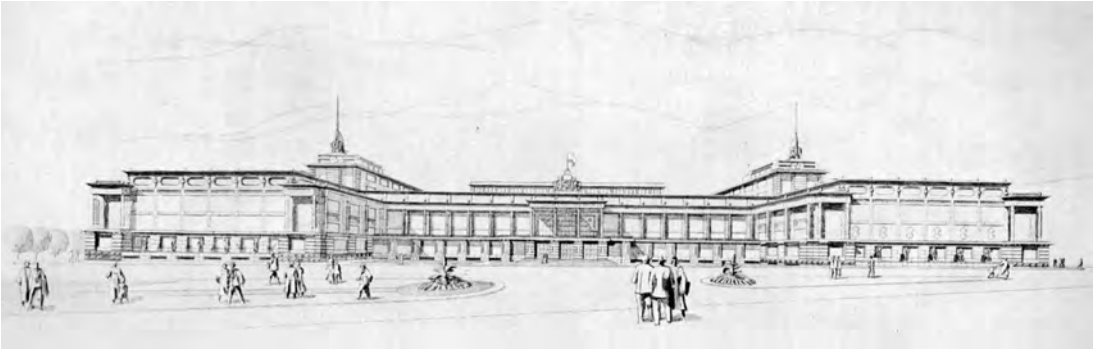


FIG. 4.24. JIŘÍ KROHA AND THE ATELIER OF NATIONAL ARTIST JIŘÍ KROHA, PROJECT FOR A LIBRARY AT THE BRNO UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY, 1951.

overall impression was institutional in character but at a pleasant, human scale that reflected the small town location and educational purpose.

Kroha reached the pinnacle of his architectural power in the fall of 1951 with the publication of his longest polemic to date, a forty-five-page article entitled “Architecture in the Interest and for the Enrichment of the Working People.”⁶⁴ Illustrations of seven of his projects accompanied the text, including the pavilion in Olomouc, the three workers’ clubs, an unbuilt project for a university library in Brno, an unbuilt project for a government building in Český Brod, and a proposal for an administrative building and entrance gate for an unnamed factory (fig. 4.24). In the text, Kroha offered a harsh critique of the current Czechoslovak situation by comparing it to the recent history of Soviet architecture. He argued that the Soviet Union rid itself of functionalist tendencies many years earlier and embraced the “the artistic aspect” of architecture and “the humanist character of realistic architectural forms and orders.” He pointed to the development of classical architecture in Greece and Rome as an analogous process in which architects “made use of historical knowledge and tradition to highlight the new progressive political ideal of the time.”⁶⁵ In order to bring about the same “disengagement from cosmopolitanism” that the Soviets had achieved, Czechoslovak architects needed to look toward “the fertile roots in [their] national tradition to stir up the creative juices and imagination needed for artistic architectural production.”⁶⁶

Since the publication of Kroha’s polemic coincided with the dismantling of the Czechoslovak Building Works and the reorganization of Stavoprojekt in October 1951, he presented his argument from a position of political and professional strength. The administrative changes were a clear indication that his vision of the architectural future had finally overtaken that of Janů and

Voženílek, who found themselves marginalized as their technocratic agenda was fatally undermined by the political elite's desire to see more evidence of socialist realism. Moscow was pressuring the government to undertake economic reforms that would bring the economy more in line with Soviet expectations.⁶⁷ Because of continuing problems with late and over-budget projects, Stavoprojekt, as part of the Czechoslovak Building Works, was not meeting its plan targets, and the organization was reconfigured with an emphasis on efficient project delivery. With the changes, ANU remained "an independent design center," but now it was "directly subordinated to the executive board of Stavoprojekt" in Prague, which was made up of political appointees.⁶⁸

NOVÁ DUBNICA

One month later, Kroha received a commission for the most significant project of his career. In 1950, in the midst of a revised Five-Year Plan that increased targets for industrial output, production capacity at the weapons and machine factories around Dubnica nad Váhom in northwestern Slovakia was expanded substantially and a new locomotive factory was built.⁶⁹ The factories needed to recruit workers, but there were few housing options in the area. In November 1951, the regional national committee in Žilina and the locomotive factory presented a plan to build a new town for fifteen thousand to twenty thousand residents on agricultural land between Trenčianske Teplá and Dubnica nad Váhom.⁷⁰ ANU was hired as the design office, partnering with the regional Stavoprojekt office in Žilina and specialty departments at Stavoprojekt in Prague.⁷¹ This was the first new town design that Kroha had attempted, and he needed assistance in particular with the infrastructure and site planning aspects of the project.

By the time Kroha and project designer Ivan Ciporanov published the design for the town in *Architektura ČSR* in the spring of 1952, the projected population of Nová Dubnica was 20,000 to 25,000 people in 5,710 apartment units on 115 hectares (284 acres) of land (fig. 4.25).⁷² Early renderings of the project show a town set in the countryside amid lush greenery and distant hills. The center of the settlement was a public square with a tall administrative building at its far end, nestled between perimeter blocks with interior shared courtyards. The accompanying text described small single-family homes on the southern edge of town. The inhabitants' quality of life was also considered, with a shopping street, indoor and outdoor theaters, a dance pavilion, schools, sports fields, a swimming pool, hospital, and an area for public demonstrations.⁷³ The project was modeled in part on the nineteenth-century utopian socialist projects of Robert Owen at New Lanark in Scotland and Charles Fourier's proposal for a phalanstery in rural France, images of which appear on display boards for the Nová Dubnica project in the Kroha archive.⁷⁴ The town



FIG. 4.25. JIŘÍ KROHA AND THE ATELIER OF NATIONAL ARTIST JIŘÍ KROHA, MASTER PLAN FOR NOVÁ DUBNICA, 1951.

center included a series of mixed-use buildings linked by covered arcades—a design element also present in Fourier’s description of the phalanstery (figs. 4.26–4.28).⁷⁵ As in the projects by Owen and Fourier, there was an expectation that Nová Dubnica would be a freestanding model town—self-sufficient, community oriented, and pleasant to inhabit.

Construction was to occur in stages, but the first phase was developed quickly to alleviate the immediate housing shortage. At the request of the management of the new locomotive factory, most of the first three hundred units were small, standardized two-room bachelor apartments “to house the largest possible number of unmarried employees” by the end of 1952.⁷⁶ These units were contained within two massive apartment buildings that dominated the site and the landscape around it (fig. 4.29). The designs were variations on Stavoprojekt’s standard T20 block for 1952.⁷⁷ The central volume of each building was six stories high and stepped back at the far corners to five stories to create roof decks on the top floor. At the ground level, the entrances were decorated with intricate and colorful floral mosaics.

Above the entrance at the sixth story were decorative patterns that helped to emphasize the verticality of the center volume, which was painted a darker color and set out from the façade just enough to create a prominent shadow



FIG. 4.26. PERSPECTIVE OF T20 BUILDING FROM SHOPPING ARCADE, NOVÁ DUBNICA, C. 1952.

FIG. 4.27. SQUARE FROM SHOPPING ARCADE, NOVÁ DUBNICA, C. 1959.



FIG. 4.28. SHOPPING ARCADE, NOVÁ DUBNICA, 2004.



FIG. 4.29. ELEVATION OF T20 BUILDING, NOVÁ DUBNICA, C. 1952.



FIG. 4.30. T20 BUILDING, NOVÁ DUBNICA, C. 1955.



FIG. 4.31. DECORATIVE ELEMENTS ON THE TOP STORY OF T20 BUILDING, NOVÁ DUBNICA, 2004.

line (figs. 4.30 and 4.31). However, the most striking detail of each building was the single-story tower capped by a large spire at the center point of the roof. The spires were similar to the original design for the Olomouc medical pavilion and workers' clubs around Ostrava, but the size and vertical height of these examples made them exceptional. Stylistically, the spires are curious and give the impression of an Asian precedent, although no documentation survives to confirm any such interpretation. More likely, the spires were Kroha's idiosyncratic take on the regional architecture around Nová Dubnica. For example, the tower on the village church in nearby Dubnica nad Váhom was constructed in two parts, with the top of the tower appearing to rest on four balls at its corners, as seen in a late nineteenth-century postcard (fig. 4.32). This and other local variations on church designs may have given him the idea to stretch the upper part of the tower into a spire.

In January 1953, planning started on the second phase, which included three- and four-story buildings with larger apartments for families. These buildings would enclose the space around the T20 blocks, creating the courtyards, arcaded shopping streets, and public square proposed in the original design (fig. 4.33). Playgrounds, a nursery, and school buildings completed the interior layout of the courtyards. Like the design for Poruba, this urban

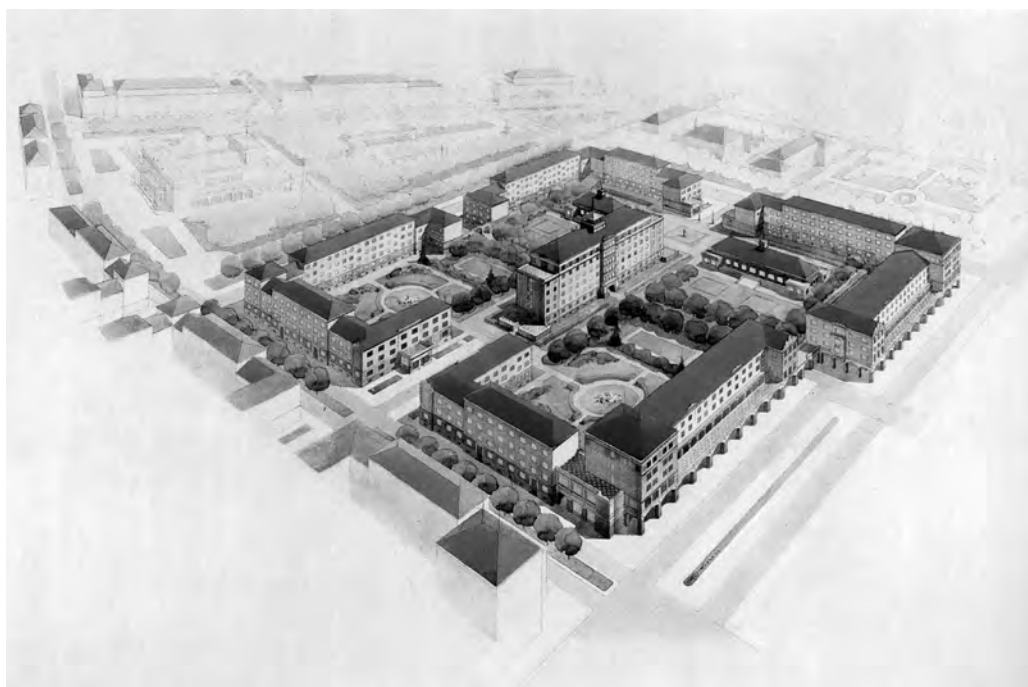


FIG. 4.32. POSTCARD VIEW OF DUBNICA NAD VÁHOM, 1897.

FIG. 4.33. ENSEMBLE IN NOVÁ DUBNICA, 1951.



FIG. 4.34. PERSPECTIVE OF T20 AND COURTYARD WITH SCHOOL, NOVÁ DUBNICA, C. 1952.

scheme, with its superbblock configuration, continuous street wall, fluid spatial relationships between streets, courtyards, and civic spaces, as well as the lack of streets in the interior of the blocks, was reminiscent of housing projects in Vienna from the 1920s (fig. 4.34).

The design of Nová Dubnica gave Kroha an opportunity to put forward a comprehensive architectural argument for socialist realism, a method he had largely defended in his writings and unbuilt projects to that point. One of his primary objectives was to find a specific Czechoslovak vocabulary for his buildings. He argued against copying from Russia, because that country's heritage was distinct from that of Czechoslovakia. In their joint statement in *Architektura ČSR*, Kroha and Ciporanov claimed that ANU would "build a socialist town whose color scheme, lyricism, and architectural concept would be linked in the best way to the healthy tradition of vernacular building in Slovakia."⁷⁸

Although specific documentation about local research for the design of Nová Dubnica has not been found, the type of work that atelier employees may have done can be inferred from a series of research photographs and sketches that were associated with an unbuilt 1954 project in the neighboring town of Dubnica nad Váhom.⁷⁹ In these photographs, found in Kroha's archive, men are seen standing in front of local houses with a meter stick to indicate the scale of the buildings (fig. 4.35). There are watercolor sketches of local streets and measured drawings that show the distances between houses and their architectural elements (figs. 4.36 and 4.37). These drawings are

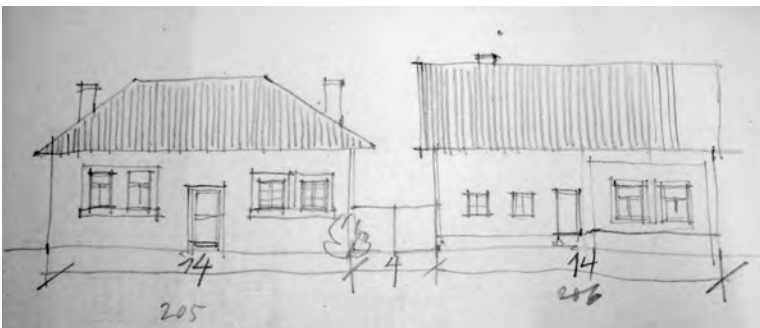


FIG. 4.35. ATELIER OF NATIONAL ARTIST JIŘÍ KROHA, RESEARCH PHOTOGRAPH FROM DUBNICA NAD VÁHOM, 1954.

FIGS. 4.36 AND 4.37. RESEARCH SKETCHES FROM DUBNICA NAD VÁHOM, 1954.



FIG. 4.38. ATELIER OF NATIONAL ARTIST JIŘÍ KROHA, RESEARCH PHOTOGRAPH FROM DUBNICA NAD VÁHOM, 1954.



FIG. 4.39. BAROQUE MANSION AFTER RENOVATION, DUBNICA NAD VÁHOM, 2008.

referred to in an accompanying report, which stated that ANU employees had made orthogonal drawings of the fronts of all houses in the town.⁸⁰

There was also interest in the local monuments in Dubnica nad Váhom, including the church and a seventeenth-century mansion, built in 1670 and in disrepair by the 1950s.⁸¹ The report described the process of gathering information: “Interesting groupings of some of the objects were recorded in perspective sketches based on the wishes of the national artist and his particular perspective on the historic core[:] the local church and its surroundings and the specified mansion, from which requisite floor plans and important details were to be adapted, such as details of cornices, windows, doors, and all the exceptional examples of decorative embellishments of the façades.”⁸² Although the research was for another project, the baroque mansion and church were likely the inspiration for Kroha’s unique embellishments on the Nová Dubnica T20 façades, including not only the spires themselves but also their patterns and colors. Both historic buildings have towers with punched circular openings and wavy geometric designs, similar to the sixth story and rooflines of the T20 buildings (figs. 4.38 and 4.39). Using a palette similar to the one used for the watercolor sketches, the designers of Nová Dubnica included earth-tone beige and browns for the main façades, with reddish stone at the ground floor and orange roof tiles. Decorative plaster reliefs

in dark red and golden brown flanked the entrances to the interiors of the superblocks, and red sgraffito decoration added color and texture along the cornices (fig. 4.40). Together, these details show an earnest attempt to bring to life the socialist realist slogan, “national in form, socialist in content.”

Like most housing projects in the early 1950s, Nová Dubnica was completed behind schedule and over budget. The T20 blocks opened almost one year late, in September 1953.⁸³ Some of the delay was due to the lack of fresh water sources for the settlement, a problem that would not be solved until after 1955. There were also difficulties with securing enough workers for the building site and obtaining the necessary materials. Construction on the second and third phases would continue until the end of the atelier in 1956 and beyond; after the office closed, some ANU employees were sent to the Ostrava office of Stavoprojekt, where they continued working on projects in Nová Dubnica and Dubnica nad Váhom for several years.⁸⁴ In the end, the first master plan was never fully executed. Only four of the original ensembles and the main square, without the monumental administration building, were completed according to Kroha’s designs. Nothing was built by ANU in Dubnica nad Váhom. In the 1960s and 1970s, Nová Dubnica expanded, but the new buildings did not reflect the socialist realist style of the older part of the town.⁸⁵

THE OSTRAVA MODEL HOUSING DEVELOPMENT

After the commission for Nová Dubnica and the delays associated with the first phase, the atelier once again found itself without enough work and Kroha appealed to Stavoprojekt for more assignments.⁸⁶ To his dismay, several ANU projects had been abandoned around this time, including a 1951 campus design for the College of Chemistry in Pardubice.⁸⁷ The proposal had included offices, classrooms, laboratories, and an auditorium, along with dormitories and student facilities. The main building’s symmetrical façade, oversized entrance portico, large columns, and dia-



FIG. 4.40. DECORATIVE PANEL ON T13 BLOCK, NOVÁ DUBNICA, 2004.

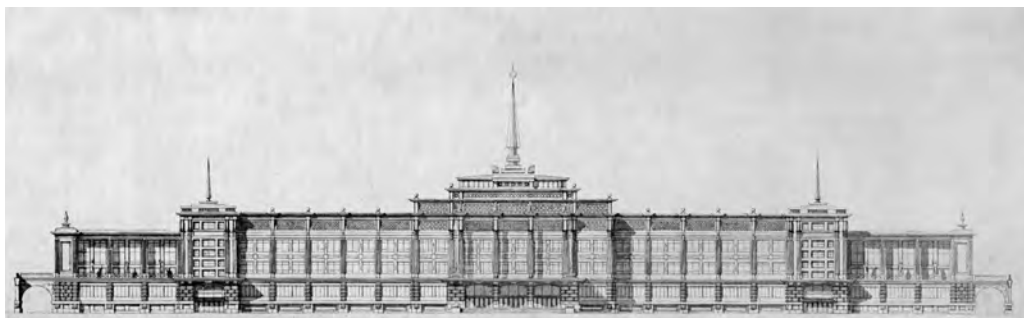


FIG. 4.41. JIŘÍ KROHA AND THE ATELIER OF NATIONAL ARTIST JIŘÍ KROHA, PROJECT FOR THE COLLEGE OF CHEMISTRY IN PARDUBICE, 1951.

FIG. 4.42. ENTRANCE FOR THE COLLEGE OF CHEMISTRY, 1951.

mond-patterned decorations were all intensifications of earlier decorative schemes (figs. 4.41 and 4.42). The most exaggerated feature was Kroha's now signature spire, which punctuated the silhouettes of all the proposed buildings on the campus and included a colossal spire over the main building's entrance that almost doubled its height.

In what appeared to be a response to Kroha's request for more work, another large project came into the office in the summer of 1952, when Kroha was asked to complete the second phase of the Ostrava Model Housing Development. In 1950, the neighborhood, which had been called Bělský Les, was renamed Stalingrad. Unlike the Nová Dubnica work, for this project Kroha had to work within an existing master plan, one completed in 1947 by local architects working for the building association that had been overseeing the project (see fig. 1.31).⁸⁸ During the first phase of construction, fifteen three- and four-story apartment buildings had been constructed along one edge of the site before the implementation of the standardized T-series in 1950 (see figs. 1.44–1.47). Over the next two years, several dozen standardized buildings were constructed on the site based on the original master plan. These included four-story T11 blocks with three-room apartments and six-story T20 blocks with two-room apartments (the same standardized type that Kroha used at Nová Dubnica) (figs. 4.43 and 4.44).

For the second phase of Bělský Les–Stalingrad,

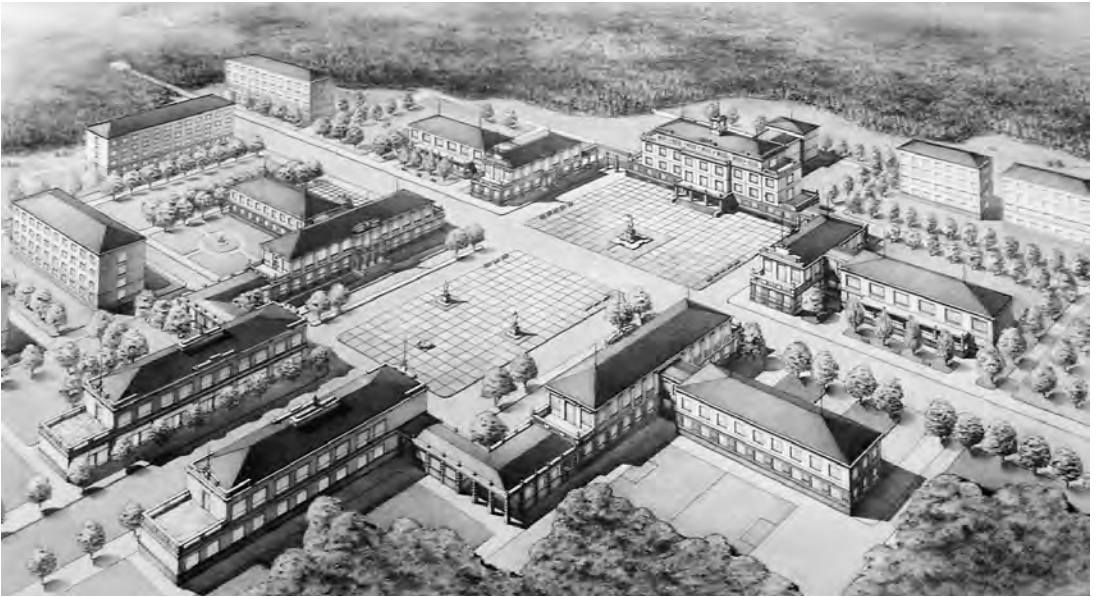


FIG. 4.43. T11 APARTMENT BUILDINGS AT THE MODEL HOUSING DEVELOPMENT IN OSTRAVA, 1951–1954.

FIG. 4.44. T20 APARTMENT BUILDING AT THE MODEL HOUSING DEVELOPMENT IN OSTRAVA, 2006.

FIG. 4.45. JIŘÍ KROHA AND THE ATELIER OF NATIONAL ARTIST JIŘÍ KROHA, PERSPECTIVE OF THE MAIN SQUARE AT THE MODEL HOUSING DEVELOPMENT IN OSTRAVA, 1952.

Kroha was commissioned to design a civic center and create a formal gateway at the northern end of the site (fig. 4.45).⁸⁹ He chose to add larger, more decorative residential buildings along the main avenue from the new gateway to the main square (figs. 4.46–4.49). Each building started as a standardized type from the T-series that was then embellished with different patterns, decorative entryways, railings, and rooflines. The civic buildings around the main square included a health clinic, post office, grocery stores, a depart-



FIG. 4.46. VIEW LOOKING NORTH FROM THE SQUARE, MODEL HOUSING DEVELOPMENT IN OSTRAVA, 2006.

FIG. 4.47. VIEW SHOWING GATE BUILDINGS (*FRONT*) AND HOUSE OF CULTURE (*BEHIND*), MODEL HOUSING DEVELOPMENT IN OSTRAVA, AFTER 1956.

FIG. 4.48. APARTMENT BUILDINGS THAT CREATE A GATE AT THE NORTH ENTRANCE TO THE MODEL HOUSING DEVELOPMENT IN OSTRAVA, 2006.

FIG. 4.49. COURTYARD SIDE OF T15 APARTMENT BUILDING ON THE STREET BETWEEN THE NORTH ENTRANCE AND THE MAIN SQUARE, MODEL HOUSING DEVELOPMENT IN OSTRAVA, 2006.

ment store, and a House of Culture; schools and a children's nursery were situated among the residential blocks (fig. 4.50).⁹⁰ Stylistically the civic buildings were similar to those in Nová Dubnica, although at a smaller scale, with arcades connecting the health clinic and post office, which face each other across the square, to the main commercial street (fig. 4.51). The ensemble had a classical decorative scheme that included stucco relief work, statuary, and column-pilaster combinations on all the façades.

As built, the health clinic was closest to Kroha's proposal, with a central entrance marked by a portico and a triangular pediment piece on the



FIG. 4.50. DEPARTMENT STORE ON THE MAIN SQUARE AT THE MODEL HOUSING DEVELOPMENT IN OSTRAVA, AFTER 1956.

FIG. 4.51. ARCADE AT THE MODEL HOUSING DEVELOPMENT IN OSTRAVA CONNECTING THE POST OFFICE TO A COMMERCIAL AND RESIDENTIAL BUILDING, 2006.



FIG. 4.52. HEALTH CLINIC AT THE MODEL HOUSING DEVELOPMENT IN OSTRAVA, C. 1954.



FIG. 4.53. ENTRANCE TO THE HEALTH CLINIC AT THE MODEL HOUSING DEVELOPMENT IN OSTRAVA, 2006.

roof topped by a flowerlike sculpture; the original drawings show it culminating in a needlelike spire or antenna (figs. 4.52 and 4.53). The two-story building was stepped back on the second story to create small balconies similar to those on the top floor of the T20 buildings in Nová Dubnica. The House of Culture was not finished until 1956, and its design, with nautical round windows and more abstract decoration, indicated the shift from socialist realism to more avant-garde-inspired designs (fig. 4.54).⁹¹

From 1952 to early 1955, the work at ANU was focused almost exclusively on the projects at Nová Dubnica and Ostrava–Bělský Les/Stalingrad, both of which suffered chronic delays, budget overruns, material shortages, and infrastructure problems. When another reorganization of Stavoprojekt dismantled the executive board and moved the organization into the Ministry of Community Enterprise (Ministerstvo místního hospodářství) in late 1954, ANU was renamed the Master Atelier of National Artist Jiří Kroha (Mistrovský atelier národního umělce Jiřího Krohy, or MANU) and attached to Stavoprojekt's State Design Institute for Regional Planning in Prague (Státní projektový ústav pro rayonové plánování v Praze). This added an additional layer of oversight to the project management at MANU, but little about the everyday operations of the office changed.⁹²



FIG. 4.54. HOUSE OF CULTURE, AFTER 1956. THE SLOGAN ABOVE THE ENTRANCE READS “COMMUNISM—THE HOPE OF HUMANITY.”

THE END OF THE ATELIER

Kroha's trouble began when architect Ivan Ciporanov, the former project architect for Nová Dubnica, sent a letter denouncing Kroha to Josef Kyselý, minister of community enterprise, on January 11, 1955. After working in Kroha's atelier for three years, the Bulgarian-born Ciporanov had been fired in June 1954 for insubordination and failure to follow the orders of his superiors.⁹³ In his lengthy letter to the minister, Ciporanov described Kroha as “a dictatorial man, without social feelings, typically bourgeois in his deeds and ways of conduct, decidedly oriented toward capitalism, superficial in his political sense. For him, progressive ideas about socialism and communism primarily represent a means to achieve personal success.”⁹⁴ He accused Kroha of a variety of more intimate crimes, such as mistreating his chauffeur, putting his name on other people's projects, and overemphasizing his friendships with famous politicians and government figures.⁹⁵ Ciporanov also attacked Kroha on the basis of his performance as an architect. He criticized Kroha for his “noticeable lack of technical knowledge and his unoriginal and inconsistent way of thinking,” for “terrorizing and threatening the workers at MANU, and [for] upholding a climate of persistent tension and nervousness.” Ciporanov concluded his comments by stating that, in general, “the function

of this national artist in our cultural and public life and his influence on the development of our socialist architecture is negative.”⁹⁶

Within the volatile political climate of 1955, it is not surprising that such a damning letter initiated a clandestine inquiry into the day-to-day practices of Kroha’s office. In February 1955, Kroha hired his longtime friend Václav Roštlapil, who was working at Stavoprojekt in České Budějovice, to become his deputy at MANU.⁹⁷ In April, an internal audit was conducted at the request of a small committee convened to investigate Ciporanov’s complaints. The committee members included Karel Neumann and Josef Pokorný from the Central Administration of the State Design Institutes (the name of Stavoprojekt when it was part of the Ministry of Community Enterprise) and Oldřich Starý, Václav Hilský, and Jaroslav Pokorný from the Union of Architects. Few people were aware of the situation. According to the brief minutes that survive from the committee’s two meetings, Ciporanov’s original letter was “safely deposited” at the offices of the Central Administration and only a few copies were made for distribution.⁹⁸ Despite the serious nature of the complaints, the committee members did not consider Ciporanov’s claims to be grounds for Kroha’s immediate dismissal. The committee was even curious about Ciporanov himself and requested that his confidential personnel file be made available to them in order to assess his “character.” During the second meeting, the committee “decided to put off the conversation with [Kroha] until the next week” because he was busy overseeing the stadium reconstruction for the 1955 Spartakiada (fig. 4.55). When the next meeting would be held was to be decided upon “in agreement” with Kroha and “according to the scheduling possibilities of the members of the commission.”⁹⁹

These men, most of whom had been colleagues of Kroha’s for more than thirty years, were not acting with great urgency to remove him from his position. At a meeting with MANU employees near the end of the investigation, Karel Neumann, director of the Central Administration of State Design Institutes, admitted that, in the beginning, mistakes had been made in handling complaints raised by current and former employees:

At the Central Administration, we knew about the complaints of your comrades, but your comrades in the union and party organizations declared that they would solve all of these problems on their own as soon as possible. I personally handled a few of the complaints with Kroha and Roštlapil. Comrade Kroha called the accusations into question, and I made the presumption that it was not such a burning matter. We didn’t have any inkling about the real situation. . . . This is not an apology; it is only an explanation. . . . I tried to resolve the matter with Kroha with greater discretion than with other directors, because I respected the national artist. I criticized him, because the atelier was not integrated and was not capable of working as a group on even one project. Kroha objected that I was [disturbing] him and disrupting his work with such things.¹⁰⁰



FIG. 4.55. STRAHOV STADIUM, DURING THE 1955 SPARTAKIADA, RENOVATED BY THE MASTER ATELIER OF NATIONAL ARTIST JIŘÍ KROHA.

Rather than pursuing a more serious intervention, the committee reached a compromise whereby MANU would become a subsidiary office of the State Design Institute in Prague (Státní projektový ústav v Praze) as of July 1955.

A set of rules, known as the “theses,” was drafted to make explicit the nature of the new relationship. Under the new guidelines, Kroha retained his central position as the public face and creative force of MANU, although virtually all other management functions were delegated among eight new inter-office administrative bodies. The situation was described as follows:

The specificity of MANU is that the national artist as director of the office is currently the main architect of all the projects on which MANU works. The national artist is thus directly participating in all of the work of his master atelier, and the activities of the atelier are inseparably connected with the character of the national artist. The national artist may, according to his own reasoning, assign associates or his deputy to act as the main architect of projects (accountable to the

designer). With consideration for the creative side of the operation, the director of the office may transfer the responsibility for the management duties of the administrative bodies to the office's main engineer.¹⁰¹

The softness of the language, particularly the use of “may,” only thinly disguised the intention to relieve Kroha of his managerial duties. This significant demotion, from the head of an independent atelier to the director of a branch office of the State Design Institute in Prague, was the first indicator that Kroha's position was in serious jeopardy.

At the same time that the denunciation was submitted, a shift in architectural culture began in the aftermath of the speech Nikita Khrushchev delivered at the All-Union Conference of Builders, Architects, and Building Industry Workers in Moscow on December 7, 1954. Soon translated and published in Czech by the Research Institute for Construction and Architecture (Výzkumný ústav výstavby a architektury), the speech explicitly denounced the exaggerated style of Soviet socialist realism and demanded that architects stop building with the ostentatious and costly materials that defined the style in the Soviet Union.¹⁰² Like Khrushchev's later and more famous “Secret Speech” of 1956, the comments were not only prescriptive but also designed to place blame with particular individuals, including the head architect in Moscow and professors at the Academy of Architecture, who were named among the worst offenders.

The 1954 speech marked the beginning of a new era in architectural design. The significance of this reversal in Czechoslovakia cannot be overstated. Architects who practiced at the time continue to speak of architecture in this period as “before” and “after” Khrushchev, specifically in reference to the speech and not to his tenure as party leader.¹⁰³ The decorative and symbolic potential of architecture that had been manipulated to great effect in the Soviet Union, and with more limited success in the Eastern Bloc, was being shunned in the face of new building strategies that placed economic concerns at the fore. Architects who had struggled with or refused to adjust to a socialist realist vocabulary finally found themselves relieved of the burden.

Kroha was vulnerable from this point forward because he had been both the country's leading exponent of Soviet models since 1948 and a supporter of the Soviet Union more generally since his first visit there in 1930. His relationship to the Soviet system and the doctrine of socialist realism was, however, more complex than his past suggested. He saw a unique path to socialism in Czechoslovakia, distinct from that being followed in the Soviet Union, even if its system was the model. In 1952, for example, Kroha stressed the need for Czech and Slovak architects to improve their knowledge of the Soviet Union and bring this information to bear on their own work:

Incomplete knowledge of the history, of the gradual development of the individual stages of Soviet architecture . . . elicited in us—and mainly among architects—a necessarily simplistic, schematic idea not only about Soviet architecture but also about its fundamental meaning for our work. In striving for a new orientation, we spoke broadly about disengaging from cosmopolitanism, about taking up the progressive national tradition, about the necessity of staying faithful to the principles of architectural work, but for the most part without any kind of concrete application in current commissions, without any kind of fruitful response in real products in the workplace.¹⁰⁴

Therefore, he encouraged the creation of an exemplary body of work in Czechoslovakia to serve as the national model: “Socialists and Communists as the heirs to the national traditions, as creative developers of the progressive values of the working people building socialism, and as an inspiration for socialist architecture—let this be the root of the political, ideological, and moral unity of Czechoslovak architects, of those entrusted to give the country new, well-known signs, strengthening in us everything for a more responsible life, and with that, a more beautiful life.”¹⁰⁵ First and foremost, Kroha saw himself as a Czech artist contributing to the creation of the new socialist society in his country, which could become another model for the international working class. This position served him well in the earliest years of the Communist regime but proved problematic as Czech and Slovak architects began to move away from the formal and conceptual restraints imposed by socialist realism.

Although one may speculate about the relationship between the events of January 1955—for example, whether Ciporanov knew about Khrushchev’s speech when he wrote his letter to the ministry—it is clear that the combination of the denunciation, the ensuing investigation into the practices at MANU, and the shift of architectural priorities in the wake of Khrushchev’s remarks proved extremely detrimental to Kroha’s high position. One is tempted to attribute Kroha’s fall to the whims and political maneuvering of the state administration and the party elite, especially in light of the show trials. However, surviving archival documents tell a more complex story and reveal a clash of creative impulses that was related to both generational differences and conflicting personal beliefs about architecture.

The available information suggests that Jiří Kroha finally lost his office because of some particularly egregious examples of negative attitudes and practices at MANU. The investigation into Ciporanov’s accusations revealed three primary problems: Kroha’s disrespectful and sometimes abusive behavior toward his employees and colleagues; poor business practices and frequent budget overruns on projects; and, finally, Kroha’s attachment to the idea of architecture as art. All three of these problems were addressed in Ciporanov’s letter, although as Karel Neumann noted in his 1956 comments,

Kroha's status as a national artist made the administration suspicious of all the claims at first. Perhaps none of these individual problems would have caused such swift action, but in combination they provided a sound basis for removing Kroha.

When the audit committee was convened in April 1955, their first request was a list of all projects under development at MANU that would require funds not already allocated in the yearly plan; in other words, they wanted a list of projects that were over budget.¹⁰⁶ The list contained twenty-three distinct items, most related to Nová Dubnica. At the time, a separate investment structure was still in place for funding projects, so MANU was not providing the investors (i.e., national committees, municipalities, national enterprises, and ministries) with the finished architectural projects that they had commissioned for the agreed budget. One main objective of the reorganization of the office in July 1955 was to streamline project delivery.

Employees complained that there was little continuity in the office as projects were bounced from person to person. For example, an architect named Jakubec reported that one of his colleagues, Rudolf Oplt, had been removed improperly from his role in the Nová Dubnica project even though he was the most familiar with the budget situation. His colleague, Vladimír Černický, added, "[Oplt] was removed from his position as head of the project two days before the delivery of the general plan. Nonetheless, we wanted to show a position toward the work that was different from the chairman's; we finished the project and submitted it a day early. Three days later, I was offered more work, without a retraction of the removal of the project leadership. I don't accept this proposal."¹⁰⁷ A September 1955 audit conducted by employees from the state design institutes in Brno and Pardubice suggested severe problems; project records on file were not even complete. They reported that "because of non-existent archiving in the office it was not possible to locate the majority of the needed documents for an objective examination of particular points, and in most cases it was necessary to depend on the testimony of individual members of the office [for our information]."¹⁰⁸

In addition to procedural and budgetary problems, Kroha's personal behavior was a focus during the investigation. He was portrayed as an abusive manager who did not reward hard work and often insulted his subordinates in public. Architect Jan Filsak recalled that the national artist once said, "My employees are pumps who spew out crap, and I'm standing in it up to my waist."¹⁰⁹ Josef Konvalina, who left the office between July 1955 and April 1956, stated, "We labored like mules for the Spartakiada, but the managers of MANU never came by during the work to take a look. Comrade Kroha took in a large honorarium for this project, but many employees were never paid for their overtime hours." The working conditions were so objection-

able that Neumann reported difficulties attracting employees to the office.¹¹⁰ According to a July 1955 employee list, 27 percent of the funded positions in the office remained unfilled.¹¹¹ By April 1956, the employee roster had expanded, but based on the opinions expressed at the employees' meeting, there was little improvement in working conditions.¹¹²

The final struggle that Kroha faced with the post-1955 administration was defending the role of architecture as an artistic endeavor. Kroha saw architecture as contributing to the building of socialism—a critical element of the cultural superstructure. As priorities shifted away from the representational qualities of architecture and toward a more instrumental use of architecture to build up the industrial base, Kroha found himself increasingly ignored by ambitious technocrats who treated him as a relic of an earlier time.

An example of this conflict was Kroha's objection to the structural panel, which was in limited production in Gottwaldov beginning in 1954. According to Kroha, the structural panel was indicative of the increasing influence of a technocratic worldview penetrating Czechoslovak society from the Soviet Union. Just weeks before his office would be officially closed, Kroha attended the inaugural directors' meeting of the reorganized state design institutes within the new Central Administration for Housing and Civic Building (Ústřední správa pro bytovou a občanskou výstavbu). It was the first and only meeting of the group that he would attend. In a series of defiant exchanges with other directors, he promoted artistic approaches over economic and technical solutions. Kroha's distinct position stood out among the more conservative voices calling for plans such as the use of "good and model projects for repetition" in up to 80 percent of all housing projects.¹¹³ He warned the other directors about placing too much value on the Soviet experience:

We should remember one thing that could damage the work of our architects in a serious way and that is, that what's going on in the Soviet Union isn't going on in Czechoslovakia. In this country, as far as concerns standardization, the State Institute of Standardization protects it and in the Soviet Union they are just establishing such an institution for the first time now. Today it is possible to say that our standardization specialists deserve a huge amount of credit for this, that they approved our high standard and that apartments in the USSR are not equipped like ours.¹¹⁴

He was explicit in his dislike for buildings constructed completely out of structural panels: "I also want to say... [that] looking ahead, this is not standardization, making panels into apartments, this is surely not right. We know that with time things are moving toward horizontal standardization[:] this will not only be toward the production of panels, but mainly toward the assembly of skeletons."¹¹⁵ These positions, voiced just two months before the closure of MANU, highlighted how out of step Kroha was with the prevail-

ing trends in Czechoslovak design. At the time, most architects in the state administration voiced little concern about the stylistic or moral questions surrounding the panel building and, instead, saw them as the ultimate solution to consistently fulfilling their plan requirements for new construction.

KROHA AND SOCIALIST REALISM

Architectural historians have written little about this era of Kroha's career, and, with a few exceptions, the projects remain obscure even to specialists. Many have dismissed the whole socialist realist period as a blemish on Czechoslovak architecture and refuse to engage questions of its stylistic or material condition without passing moral or ethical judgment on the context in which it was produced. Structural engineer Josef Šanda, a professor at the Academy of Arts, Architecture, and Design (*Vysoká škola uměleckoprůmyslová*) in Prague, exemplified this opinion in December 2002 when he wrote an angry letter to the professional journal *Architekt* after participating in a public seminar on socialist architecture held at the school in conjunction with an exhibition on socialist realism at a nearby museum.¹¹⁶ The letter prompted the journal to solicit additional comments from other seminar attendees and publish the full exchange in February 2003 under the heading "In the Shadow of Sorela: Art and Morality."¹¹⁷

Šanda complained bitterly that speakers at the seminar paid little attention to the traumatic individual narratives of architects who were ostracized from their profession and in some cases imprisoned. For him, the only appropriate discussion would focus on the crimes of the regime and not on the architecture, because the buildings were inextricably linked with unforgivable behavior among complicit architects and members of the party. He wrote,

It is alarming that the declaration of so-called leftist views, or enthusiasm for building, or possibly only a conviction about the appropriateness of the new means of expression can be presented as an explanation for active participation in a system of oppression and repression, for being responsible for the imprisonment or persecution of colleagues, for supporting others' loss of freedom. In communities like ours that do not show the slightest signs of an appetite for reflection on our past, it may never have occurred to anyone that ideology and decency (or in the end criminal behavior) are in no way connected.¹¹⁸

Many of the other commentators recognized the need for such a public reexamination and the value of high-quality, informed scholarship on the controversial topic.¹¹⁹

Yet in the months that followed, Šanda and other sympathetic older faculty members at the school successfully campaigned to oust one of the seminar organizers, noted architectural historian Jindřich Výbiral, from his posi-

tion as vice rector of the school. Another professor, Martin Kubelík, resigned from his teaching position at the school the same month, claiming that the seminar “glorified a dark era in the history of my country” and exposed the “immoral and opportunistic position” of the organizers.¹²⁰ Šanda’s comments and the events that followed are especially relevant to the reception of Kroha’s work, since he was the architect most entangled with the regime and susceptible to the criticism that he used “a conviction about the appropriateness of the new means of expression...as an explanation for active participation in a system of oppression and repression.”¹²¹

In her work on socialist realism in the Soviet Union, Catherine Cooke has confronted this type of criticism with vigor. In her article, “Beauty as a Route to ‘the Radiant Future,’” she argues that the aversion among many scholars and architects to participating in any serious study of socialist realism is a refusal of the architectural objects themselves and shows an inability to recognize the “sheer talent on which the [architecture] profession’s collective status ultimately depended.”¹²² She describes Stalinist architects as innovative and committed artists who actively participated in the creation of beautiful or “radiant” architecture, which was “upward-sweeping, monumental, well proportioned in its parts, open to the sun, accessible to the ordinary people—building[s] celebratory of joyfulness, and clear.”¹²³ Professionals in this environment received comprehensive academic training in “design precedent, aesthetic criticism, and the history of world architecture.” They understood the “design process itself” as a “multivariate task, part technical, part social, and very importantly, aesthetic, which Architecture with a capital ‘A’ has historically always been.”¹²⁴

In contrast to the common criticism of socialist realism as unsophisticated copying from historical sources, Cooke’s view positions artists as leaders who helped the people envision the future reality. She emphasizes the tension between the past and the future in each work and argues that it was context that mattered above all else:

In this catalytic vision of art’s role, each work must be contextual: it is designed to have a certain effect in the particular cultural and ideological context into which it will be dropped. This was why Socialist Realism was “a method[,] not a style.” It was also the reason why true originality was valued so highly, whether as formal innovation with a national language or as the spiritual originality of *samobytnost*: of a thing “being itself.” Those who produced this richer innovation on the drawing board were not necessarily those with Party-political power. Hence “power” in the profession was an equilibrium between these two factors. This accounts for the positions which such former leading Modernists as Ilia Golosov or Andrei Burov occupied in the Stalinist profession. Their sheer fecundity and originality, in the new aesthetic as in the old, assured them leading positions in the new hierarchy of official design studios.¹²⁵

Ultimately for Cooke, these architects were professionals whose high-quality work, even in the most despotic years of Stalinism, exemplified their belief in the value of architecture and the potential for the profession to contribute to the building of socialism.

It is within this frame that Kroha's architectural production comes into sharper focus. More than any of his contemporaries, he consistently spoke about architecture's potential to lead the way toward a better socialist future. In his 1952 essay, "Socialist Architecture: Architecture of Peace," Kroha wrote about his buildings in an outward-looking, optimistic, and confident tone that embodied the "radiant" vision he shared with his Soviet counterparts:

The ethos of socialist work, of creative socialist people, is reflected in the socialist order and in socialist architecture. Therefore the buildings are becoming connected with the building of socialism and communism, symbols and prefigurations of the new world. They appear today as indelible impressions on the people's consciousness, not only in the Soviet nations and the people's democracies, but on all of the working strata and classes of other nations, who are becoming hopeful beacons of their own liberation. Socialist architecture thereby acquires a new and cataclysmically revolutionary meaning in world development.... It is the architecture of the Marxist-Leninist realization of the world, socialist love, and world tranquility—an architecture of global significance and conviction.¹²⁶

Kroha's formal vocabulary—giant spires, oversized floral and geometric motifs, classical sculptures, and brightly colored façades—provided new "images" of what the socialist future would look like. These images were rooted in the local tradition, as shown in the research for Slovakia, and, at the same time, appeared unlike any buildings in Czechoslovakia before or after. Kroha's expressionist tendencies from the 1920s reemerged in the 1950s in his exuberant embrace of the method and its rhetoric.

There were, however, differences between Czechoslovakia and the Soviet Union in this regard. Cooke described architects in the Soviet Union as being rewarded for their "sheer fecundity and originality," noting that a lack of "party-political power" could be overcome within the profession through demonstrated talent.¹²⁷ This type of meritocracy developed over several professional generations, as the architects trained just before the revolution in the Russian Beaux-Arts tradition reached professional maturity in the 1930s and assumed important roles in the architectural administration. Czech and Slovak architects' introduction to Stalinism was compressed into just two years, as the first socialist vision of architecture, represented by Janů and Voženílek, was superseded by socialist realism by the end of 1950. At that time, the collective architectural consciousness of Czechs and Slovaks was still rooted in interwar functionalism and the experience of the immediate postwar era rather than in the architecture of the Habsburg nineteenth and

early twentieth centuries, which would have been a better fit with the Soviet example.

With few options and an urgent need for change, the Czechoslovak regime cultivated architects who possessed both “party-political” and professional credentials. The risk of a true meritocracy was obvious given the tenuous and violent nature of Communist rule in the early 1950s. So although Kroha was talented and arguably the most creative interpreter of socialist realism in Czechoslovakia, his rise to prominence after the war can be attributed more to his party connections than anything else. His relatively lavish lifestyle and disregard for his employees shows something of the arrogance that was common among the apparatchiks of Communist regimes. As the events of 1955 and 1956 illustrated, this reliance on his party connections left Kroha vulnerable to political attacks and changes in the regime’s priorities, despite his expectation that architectural abilities and a proper socialist point of view would guarantee his position.

In a moment of self-reflection in the midst of the official inquiry that would close his office two months later, Kroha told the committee sent to investigate him, “I am an artist, you are architects, but in my opinion, if I’m right no one can refute me. Or if perhaps I’m wrong about something today, but in time I’m shown to be right, then that would give me satisfaction.”¹²⁸

It is useful here to return to Catherine Cooke’s description of the socialist realist architect as an “artist” who leads the way towards the “radiant future.” Kroha’s comments throughout the investigation revealed a man deeply invested in a self-image as an artist, an identity that few others accepted at the time.

As Stavoprojekt returned to its agenda of standardization and industrialization, Kroha saw nothing in the organization’s rhetoric that addressed the aesthetic and visionary dimensions at the heart of his conception of socialist architecture. Although disappointed, Kroha stood by his convictions about the transformative potential of socialist architecture until the end. In her assessment of the Soviet situation, Cooke comes to a similar conclusion. She describes the Khrushchev years in the Soviet Union as obliterating Stalinist design methods and as “a period of brutally enforced rejection of architectural culture and of architecture’s subtleties as a language.”¹²⁹ For most Czech and Slovak architects, however, Khrushchev’s reforms liberated them from what they perceived to be the decorative and wasteful practices of the Stalinist period. The short socialist realist interlude temporarily suspended, but did not stop, their desired return to functionalist forms and methods, which reappeared in the late 1950s.

5 • THE INDUSTRIALIZATION OF HOUSING

Zlín and the Evolution of the Panelák

Architects...must fight against the backward, harmful idea that typification is antithetical to artistic aspirations. It is really thanks to typification that uniquely beautiful, integrated spaces succeed in being created in the world; for example, the celebrated Greek temple was in fact a type. Our architects, with the awareness that they have moved from the private atelier to a collective workplace, must...give preference to mass building production before individual commissions, however more enticing. Oldřich Starý, 1955

At the same time that socialist realism was the public face of Czechoslovakia's cultural sphere, there was a second, less visible trajectory that moved forward within Stavoprojekt: experimentation with new industrial building technologies and housing prototypes. With the end of the Czechoslovak Building Works in September 1951 and the establishment of Stavoprojekt as an independent national enterprise within the new Ministry of Building Industry (Ministerstvo stavebního průmyslu), the loci of these investigations remained in the Stavoprojekt research institutes, which proliferated in the early 1950s to include theoretical, technical, and operational aspects of architecture. Their work included producing additional designs for standardized housing blocks and small single-family homes, innovations in new building materials such as lightweight concrete mixtures and synthetic flooring, and the testing of new construction methods such as the use of prefabricated building elements, assembly-line production, mobile gantry cranes, and year-round construction schedules.

The most intense research and experimentation occurred in the area of prefabricated building panels—non-load-bearing and structural—for use in mass housing projects. In the early 1950s, much of the research on panel construction for residential apartment blocks was conducted at the new Institute of Prefabricated Buildings (Ústav montovaných staveb), headquartered in Prague and with branches in Brno and Gottwaldov (formerly Zlín). The first mass-deployed structural panel building, what is called in Czech panelový dům or panelák for short, was designed by two former Baťa architects, Bohumil Kula and Hynek Adamec, at the institute's Gottwaldov branch in 1950.¹ They named the series the “G-buildings” (*G-domy*), with the letter G signifying Gottwaldov. Within five years, the panelák was the basis of a nationwide building strategy that would attempt to alleviate, once and for all, the decades-old housing shortage in the country.² In the 1960s and 1970s, the scale of development moved from the neighborhood to the district, and soon paneláks were associated with the often bleak industrial suburbs of Czechoslovakia's cities and towns.

Amid this massive production of what many now consider substandard housing, the experiments and modest successes of 1950s panelák prototypes have been lost. As first envisioned by the research teams, panel technology would not have determined the formal or even spatial qualities of a building but rather made design and construction quicker and more cost-effective than traditional building methods. In fact, the first experiments with structural panel technology produced five-story apartment buildings that were similar in material, scale, and layout to the T-series buildings of the same era.³ These experimental blocks were often placed in established city neighborhoods and built in small groups that conformed to the existing street grid and transportation routes. In purely economic or planning terms, the transformation from traditional to industrial methods succeeded as more housing units were built for less money.⁴ Yet in the 1950s, few architects anticipated the speed with which this technology would overtake discussions of the implications of such methods for the experiential, spatial, and social qualities of residential life.

As soon as the first panelák prototypes debuted in 1954, questions were raised within the profession about the relationship between the technical and formal qualities of the results. Although most of the buildings attempted to use ornamentation to soften the harsh geometry of the panels, the scale of the prefabricated structural elements was still evident on the façades, eliciting concerns that the buildings were needlessly ugly. These comments on style arose in part because of the emphasis on aesthetics in socialist realist discourse at the time, but they also reflected some of the anxiety about typification and standardization that remained from the 1940s. As Marie Benešová, Oldřich Starý, and Julius Šif noted in a pointed 1954 commentary on behalf

of the Union of Architects' Commission for Theory and Criticism, the technical issues involved with the construction of paneláks may have been solved, but these were only one aspect of the problem. The production of high-quality panelized architecture still faced urgent artistic and formal challenges.⁵

Structural panel technology developed from wartime research in the 1940s. By 1956, the priorities of a new centralized architectural administration had accelerated its use. Although the early 1950s are mainly remembered as the era of socialist realism, the regime's commitment to industrializing building production intensified in these years as economic constraints required the delivery of buildings more cheaply and efficiently than ever before. Since architects were officially required to employ the principles of socialist realism, and respond to its preoccupations with architectural imagery, the earliest research on large-scale panel technology was undertaken largely out of the public eye and with little acknowledgment in the professional press, although the work was not done in secret. Architects in the Soviet Union followed a similar path in the early 1950s, exploring large block and panel construction in research institutes, although they had yet to perfect a structural panel by 1956.⁶ The well-developed building industry in Czechoslovakia, which operated on a much smaller scale than in the Soviet Union, proved more capable of responding to the technical challenges and production needs of the new technology. In the late 1950s, architects from the Soviet Union and other Eastern Bloc countries looked to Czechoslovakia for guidance in this area, sending delegations to tour research facilities, panel factories, and panelák construction sites.⁷

The cohort of architects and engineers who set out to find viable solutions to the problem of building housing quickly and cost-effectively were often those whose interest in the topic originated in the 1930s and 1940s, when architects around the world were investigating the potential of prefabricated housing. Their counterparts included German architects Walter Gropius, Konrad Wachsmann, and Ernst May, as well as the French architect Marcel Lods and engineer Raymond Camus.⁸ Technological advances achieved during World War II led American outfits such as the Lustron Corporation to offer prefabricated single-family houses to the mass market, although these attempts had little long-term success.⁹ Architects working at the Baťa Company's Building Department in the interwar years were particularly engaged with prefabrication methods as part of the company's campaign to expand Zlín and build Baťa cities around the world. During the war, research by Baťa architects led to the first large-panel constructions in Czechoslovakia. Within a few years, these same architects, now working for the Institute of Prefabricated Buildings, succeeded in developing a panelák prototype that would become the standard in Czechoslovakia for decades.

Two sets of concerns propelled paneláks to become the dominant housing type in postwar Czechoslovakia. The first related to influences from outside the profession: issues about the nature of state socialism and its capacity for planning; the desire for rapid social change; and the possible limitations of and appropriate organizational structure for the state administration responsible for managing construction. Second, there were discussions generated among architects: the changing role of the profession, the direction of technological progress, the scientific nature of architectural research, and the need to retain some control over design decisions. The resolution of these disparate, yet related, sets of concerns resulted in the widespread adoption of structural panel technology, much to the chagrin of design architects in the Stavoprojekt offices and to the pleasure of the technocrats in the architectural administration responsible for fulfilling plan quotas. The move toward panel construction was, therefore, a compromise position. Architects and the state accepted the compromise because it was seen as the only practical solution for meeting the demands of the planned economy given the available resources and political goals. Evidence suggests that those involved recognized this as a compromise, although some architects questioned the criteria used to determine the viability of the building method in the future.¹⁰

Coming to terms with the panelák as an architectural, rather than a technical proposition, was a complex process. The transition from individual commissions to standardized prefabricated building types was neither a decision made by the political elite and imposed on architects nor the result of untalented or malicious architectural practitioners who could not conceive of alternatives. Instead, the materialist philosophy of the government meant that, by the mid-1950s, the production of housing units was by far the most important work architects could undertake. The means and methods used to produce housing were left up to them. The response to this need for housing was not uniform; a variety of construction systems, materials, and planning patterns were considered at the time. In the end, the panelák offered the quickest and most economical solution to the housing crisis, although architects would continue to seek alternatives until the end of state socialism in Czechoslovakia.

BAŤA AND PREFABRICATION

By the mid-1920s, many European architects saw standardization and prefabrication as integral to the future of mass housing. In Germany, Walter Gropius used a system of reinforced concrete panels and cinder blocks in his 1926 project for Törten-Dessau. Completed in 1928, the building elements of 316 two-story row houses such as “cross walls, beams, infill blocks, floors, and roofs were standardized and were manufactured on the site.” Gilbert Her-



FIG. 5.1. THE BRON SYSTEM IN USE AT A CONSTRUCTION SITE, BERLIN, GERMANY, 1926.

bert writes that this was not prefabrication, although it was “a form of industrialized building, with the organization of site operations as a whole work process analogous to the factory.” At the same time, Dutch and French companies were at work on prefabrication systems using reinforced concrete. For example, the Dutch Bron system, deployed in a 1926 project at Friedrichsfelde in Berlin, “involved the casting of large story-height wall panels, complete with their windows and doors and all other components such as beams and slabs on the site, and then transporting them by a large overhead crane moving on tracks that straddled the line of buildings under construction” (fig. 5.1).¹¹ Ernst May developed this system further in his 1,400 units at Praunheim in Frankfurt, built from 1926 to 1930 using a universal prefabricated panel for walls and floors, as well as precast beams (fig. 5.2).¹² The units were also designed to accommodate Grete Schütte-Lihotzky’s compact, factory-made “Frankfurt kitchen.” Frenchmen Eugène Beaudouin and Marcel Lods designed the Cité de la Muette at Drancy near Paris in 1930. The ill-fated development, completed in 1934 but never inhabited as social housing, included a combination of high-rise and low-rise apartment blocks constructed with lightweight prefabricated concrete panels mounted on steel skeletons.¹³

Despite these promising beginnings, early experiments with prefabricated panel construction never entered the mainstream of European or American building culture. By the early 1930s, the economics of the Great Depression meant that municipalities that had funded these projects no longer had tax revenue to spend on housing.¹⁴ With the rise of fascism in Germany and the widespread retreat from the hyper-rational logic of industrialization that many believed had led to the economic crash, the concept of urban mass



FIG. 5.2. ERNST MAY, CONSTRUCTION AT PRAUNHEIM, FRANKFURT, GERMANY, 1926.

housing itself was undermined.¹⁵ In its place, the ideal of the single-family house and village life emerged.¹⁶ Only after World War II, when rebuilding was the immediate priority, would high-density social housing return as a popular option, albeit with a preference for the more flexible system of slab construction in Western Europe and the United States.

Czechoslovakia was renowned for the elegant forms of its modern architecture in the 1920s, although construction methods remained traditional—often masonry, brick, and stucco. Reinforced concrete, plate glass, and structural steel came into widespread use in the late 1920s, due in part to the availability and high quality of these materials from local sources; glass was a specialty in northern Bohemia and steel was produced in Ostrava. Czech and Slovak architects' skills with reinforced concrete and plate glass can be seen in projects such as the Trade Fair Palace, the General Pension Institute, and the Baba Housing Estate in Prague, as well as the exhibition grounds in Brno and numerous villas and apartment buildings around the country (figs. 5.3 and 5.4).¹⁷ However, unlike in Germany, France, or the Netherlands, there was little experimentation with standardized building elements, large-scale prefabrication, or panel construction in interwar Czechoslovakia. One important exception was the Building Department at the Baťa Shoe Company in Zlín, where architects mastered standardized brick and reinforced concrete constructions and experimented with prefabrication techniques for their overseas factories and company towns.

Czechoslovak developments in prefabrication, standardization, and typification after 1945 can be traced directly to the activities of these Baťa architects in the 1920s and 1930s. The company had a long history of architectural



FIG. 5.3. JOSEF FUCHS AND OLDŘICH TYL, TRADE FAIR PALACE, PRAGUE, 1925–1928.

FIG. 5.4. JOSEF KALOUS AND JAROSLAV VALENTA, RETAIL INDUSTRY PALACE AT THE EXHIBITION OF CONTEMPORARY CULTURE, BRNO, 1927–1928.



FIG. 5.5. NEW HOUSES IN ZLÍN, 1920S.

innovation. Before the 1932 death of founder Tomáš Baťa, its Building Department had designed some of the earliest examples of mass-produced standardized buildings in the world. In addition to new methods of industrialized construction, the search for ideal housing types was one of the highest priorities in the Baťa organization. Before World War II, these efforts focused on houses for one, two, or four families.¹⁸ After 1945, the emphasis shifted to apartment buildings. Zlín's first residential building boom had begun in 1924, after unrest among the workers made Tomáš Baťa fearful of the formation of a labor union. He decided to follow the example of American corporations and build a full-service factory town modeled on the system of welfare capitalism in the United States, where he traveled in 1919–1920.¹⁹

Under the leadership of head architect František Gahura, the Baťa Company initiated construction of a large company town, adjacent to and eventually surrounding the existing historic center of Zlín. Starting in 1924, several neighborhoods of brick single-family, duplex, and fourplex houses were executed according to a limited number of standardized plans that architects in the Building Department produced (figs. 5.5–5.7).²⁰ Families rented their housing units directly from the company for a modest sum, and the attractive



FIG. 5.6. CONSTRUCTION OF NEIGHBORHOODS IN ZLÍN, 1930S.

FIG. 5.7. FOURPLEXES IN AN EARLY WORKERS' DISTRICT, ZLÍN, 2004.



FIG. 5.8. FRANTIŠEK GAHURA, COMMUNITY HOUSE HOTEL, NOW HOTEL MOSKVA, ZLÍN, 1928–1930, SHOWN IN 2006.

residential and economic conditions meant that demand far outpaced supply for many years.²¹ Starting in 1926, unmarried employees could find accommodation in dormitories, built with the same methods and closely resembling the nearby factories.²² Services were concentrated in a commercial zone across a main thoroughfare from the industrial complex. All of the buildings, including a high-rise hotel, were built using a variation of the same construction system—a reinforced concrete structural skeleton infilled with brick and glass (fig. 5.8). As the company discovered, this system reduced construction time, costs, and waste. As part of its working philosophy to control as much of the supply chain as possible, the company also built production facilities in Zlín to make bricks, cement, mortar, and construction equipment.²³

In 1930, the Baťa firm recruited Vladimír Karfík to join the Building Department. At the time, he was in Chicago working at Holabird & Root, an American firm known for its skyscraper designs, and he had apprenticed with Frank Lloyd Wright at Taliesin East and West.²⁴ Karfík first gained notori-



FIG. 5.9. VLADIMÍR KARFÍK, BAŤA COMPANY HEADQUARTERS, ZLÍN, 1937, SHOWN IN 2004.

ety among Czech and Slovak architects while working in Le Corbusier's atelier on projects such as the Plan Voisin in 1925–1926.²⁵ In his memoirs, Karfík recalled that Tomáš Baťa was looking in particular for an architect with international experience. He sent his half-brother, Jan Baťa, to the Chicago office of the Czechoslovak Association of Engineers and Architects (SIA) to personally recruit experienced Czechs and Slovaks to work in Zlín.²⁶ Karfík would later put his knowledge of tall building design to use in several Baťa projects, including the company's sixteen-story skyscraper headquarters, which remains Zlín's most recognizable building (fig. 5.9).

Tomáš Baťa's aggressive entrepreneurship helped the company expand into the United States, Western Europe, and India in the early 1930s. When Jan Baťa took over the company after Tomáš's death in 1932, he accelerated international expansion into markets in southern Europe, Africa, Asia, and South America.²⁷ In addition to their work in Zlín, Gahura and Karfík oversaw the global construction of Baťa settlements, including sites in England, Switzerland, Poland, the Netherlands, Croatia, Malaya (later Malaysia), and India (fig. 5.10).²⁸ For each new site, they would send a "colony package" that included "building and town plans, construction supervisors, formwork and manufacturing machinery, a cadre of instructors and their families, as well as the Baťa management and social program officers."²⁹ As architectural historian Jean-Louis Cohen notes, "the Baťa system created a real network of



FIG. 5.10. BAŤA FACTORY IN BATOVO, YUGOSLAVIA (NOW CROATIA), 1930S.

towns which applied all over the world the solutions worked out in Czechoslovakia. It was only the town planning of these industrial centers that varied according to topography, hydrography, and infrastructure.”³⁰

Jan Baťa also continued his brother’s engagement with international modern architecture. In 1935, the company sponsored an open competition to generate new ideas for standardized single-family houses and duplexes. With Karfík’s help, Baťa brought Le Corbusier to Zlín to serve on the jury along with Czech architects Bohuslav Fuchs, Pavel Janák, František Gahura, and Edo Schön.³¹ The competition brief requested a prototype for a worker’s house with at least 80 square meters (860 square feet) of living space; duplex units could be smaller. The living room and kitchen were to be placed on the ground floor, with two or three bedrooms upstairs.³² Entries also had to have a basement, and three of the four winning entries provided a garage. With the publicity generated by Le Corbusier’s participation, 289 entries from ten countries were submitted; four received prizes.³³

First prize went to Swedish architect Erik Swedlund.³⁴ His two-bedroom, one-bathroom, 85-square-meter (915-square-foot) brick house was praised for its large ground floor living area opening onto a patio and garden, the fireplace in the center of the house with a diagonal opening, and windows with low sills on the ground floor (figs. 5.11 and 5.12).³⁵ Second prize went to the Prague team of Adolf Benš, a Corbusian modernist who would be a member of



FIG. 5.11. ERIK SWEDLUND, SINGLE-FAMILY HOUSE FOR BAŤA COMPETITION, ZLÍN, 1935.

FIG. 5.12. SWEDLUND HOUSE, ZLÍN, 2006.

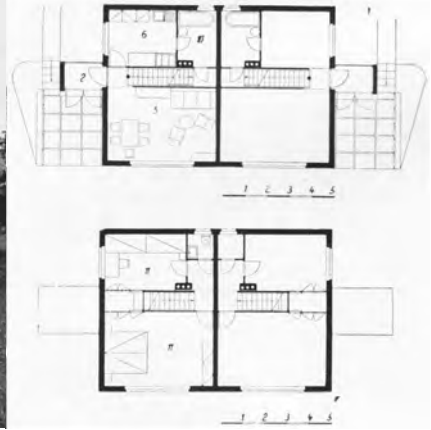


FIG. 5.13. ADOLF BENŠ AND FRANTIŠEK JECH, DUPLEX FOR BAŤA COMPETITION, SECOND PRIZE, ZLÍN, 1935.

the Central Action Committee in 1948, and František Jech, who would later be active in the Union of Socialist Architects, the Communist Party, and BAPS, as well as an early proponent of prefabrication. They submitted a duplex design in which each of the two-bedroom, one-and-a-half bathroom units contained 50 square meters (540 square feet) of living space. A central structural wall divided the two units and allowed the staircases to be located in the center of the plan, thus allowing for more natural light in the living spaces. This layout was very similar to earlier Baťa duplex types, although the innovation here was the use of rough “thermoconcrete” cladding, its surface embellished with the residual imprints of the horizontal formwork (fig. 5.13).³⁶

Third and fourth place went to local architects Vladimír Karfík and Antonín Vítek. Both of their designs were larger and more like middle-class homes than those of the other modestly sized winning entries. Vítek’s project for a brick duplex included two 65-square-meter (700-square-foot) units entered through verandas on each side of the house. In addition to a living room and kitchen on the ground floor and two large bedrooms and a bathroom upstairs, the units unexpectedly had a maid’s room and WC on the ground floor, plus a full basement and a private garage (fig. 5.14).³⁷ The extra bedroom on the ground floor may have been rented out for extra income or used as a child’s room for families without a maid, but its existence was a clear reminder of the capitalist atmosphere in Zlín.

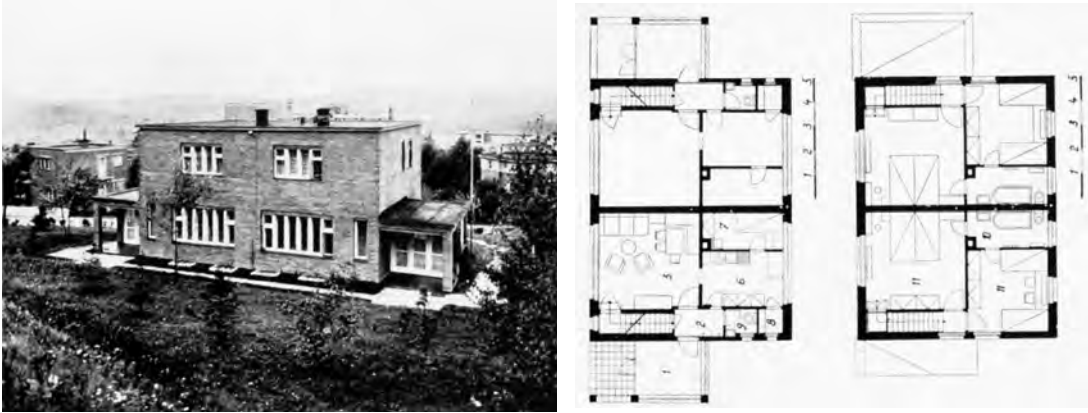


FIG. 5.14. ANTONÍN VÍTEK, DUPLEX FOR BAŤA COMPETITION, FOURTH PRIZE, ZLÍN, 1935.

Karčík's design was the largest, with more than 100 square meters (1,080 square feet) of living space for a single family. The split-level house was designed for a sloped site, a typical condition in Zlín, where many of the residential neighborhoods are in the hills above the factory. In Karčík's design, the main living areas were entered above street level from a rear patio, while the bedrooms were up another short flight of stairs and the garage and cellar were down one flight, with the driveway at street level.³⁸ The covered, south-facing patio looked toward the woods behind the house and featured a large "American-style" sliding window (figs. 5.15 and 5.16).³⁹ More than any of the other Zlín houses of the 1930s, the Karčík competition entry pushed the limits of the Baťa system by embedding the house in its site and breaking apart the rigid cubic volumes that had been the Baťa trademark up to that point.

In 1935, one prototype of each of the winning competition entries (called Type Swedlund, Type Benš-Jech, Type Karčík, and Type Vítek) was built along a hilly street above the commercial district.⁴⁰ Despite the success of the competition and the completion of the four houses, no more examples of these "types" were ever built. The local architects did build several other similar houses along the same street, using the same general shape, scale, and materials of the winning entries. Karčík also completed a number of other villas for individual Zlín residents and built a modified version of his competition entry, Type Karčík I, in 1938. It was a larger home with integrated outdoor spaces, a spacious plan, and a split section that created a roof deck off the upstairs children's bedroom (fig. 5.17). Karčík himself lived with his family in his winning competition house for ten years, until he left Zlín for Bratislava in 1946.⁴¹

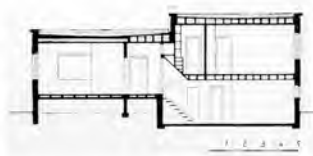


FIG. 5.15. VLADIMÍR KARFÍK, SINGLE-FAMILY HOUSE FOR BAŤA COMPETITION, THIRD PRIZE, ZLÍN, 1935.

FIG. 5.16. KARFÍK HOUSE FROM THE STREET, ZLÍN, 2008.

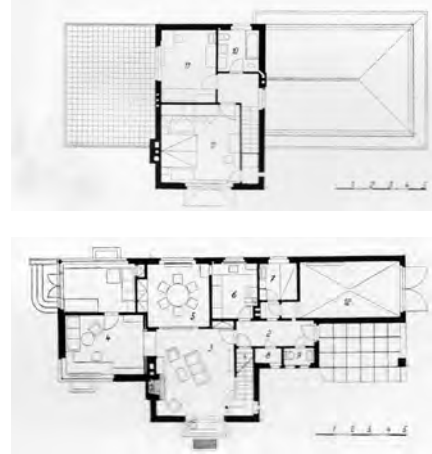


FIG. 5.17. VLADIMÍR KARFÍK, TYPE KARFÍK I, ZLÍN, 1938.

In addition to judging the house competition, Le Corbusier spent six weeks in Zlín working on a new master plan for the city. Jan Baťa, however, rejected his proposal because it required the company to tear down existing neighborhoods and stop building houses and small apartment buildings. In their place, Le Corbusier wanted to construct a series of residential towers along the hills that lined the valley from the existing town to Otrokovice, ten kilometers (six miles) to the west (fig. 5.18).⁴² Jan Baťa was too committed to his brother's ideal of the family home to agree to this radical solution, however. In subsequent years, Le Corbusier worked on designs for Baťa retail stores in France, for a French production center, and for the Baťa pavilion at the 1937 World Exposition in Paris (fig. 5.19).⁴³ Despite further negotiations, none of Le Corbusier's projects for the Baťa Company were built.⁴⁴

In the years after the competition and the failed master plan exercise, the Baťa Building Department continued to produce variations on their standardized house designs, completing as many as 600 housing units a year.⁴⁵ In 1937, the year that Kurfík's skyscraper was completed, Jiří Voženílek joined the company. Although his personal politics may have clashed with the capitalist outlook of the company, his professional ambition, background in scientific design methods, and technocratic approach made him a strong candidate for Baťa. The prosperous company also offered more job security for him than his association with the Architectural Working Group in Prague, which, despite its success in criticizing current trends, never earned its members many architectural commissions. One year later, the Germans invaded and the Baťa Company secretly began to liquidate its financial assets and

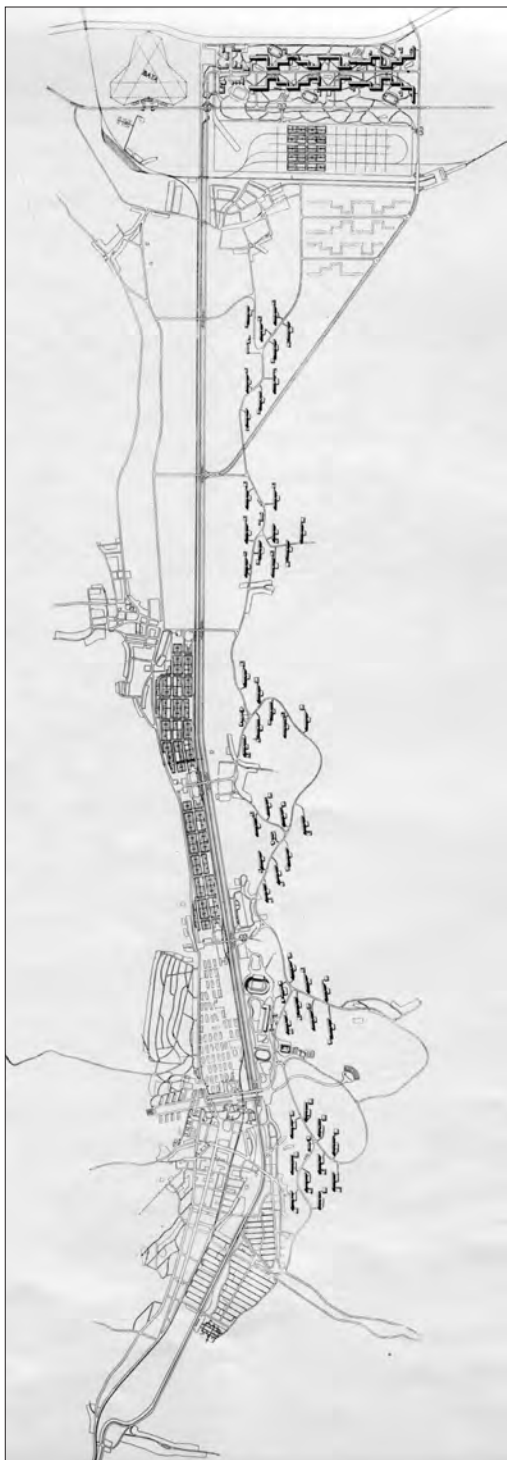


FIG. 5.18. LE CORBUSIER, MASTER PLAN FOR THE ZLÍN TO OTROKOVICE CORRIDOR, 1935.

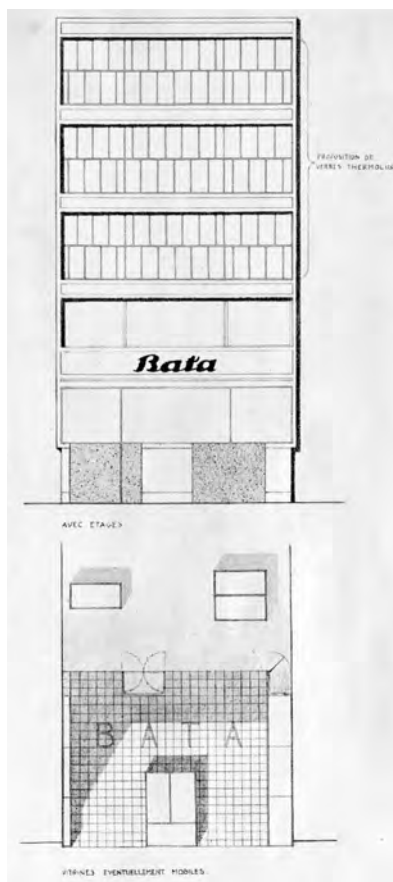
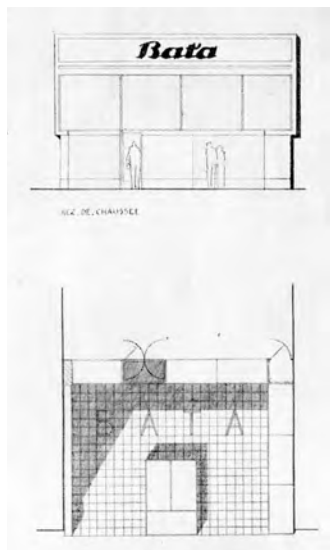


FIG. 5.19. LE CORBUSIER, DESIGNS FOR BATA RETAIL STORES, 1936.



FIG. 5.20. BOMBING IN ZLÍN, NOVEMBER 1944.

industrial equipment in preparation for the move to its new headquarters in Canada.⁴⁶ Throughout the war, under the watchful eyes of German observers, the company continued making shoes. Its employees also conducted product research and built houses, although resources such as rubber, cement, and steel were scarce and factory and construction output were reduced, especially after 1941. Only 600 housing units, including temporary accommodations, were built between 1939 and 1945, equivalent to one good year in the previous decade. When Allied warplanes bombed the factory and town in November 1944, 141 of the housing units were destroyed (fig. 5.20).⁴⁷

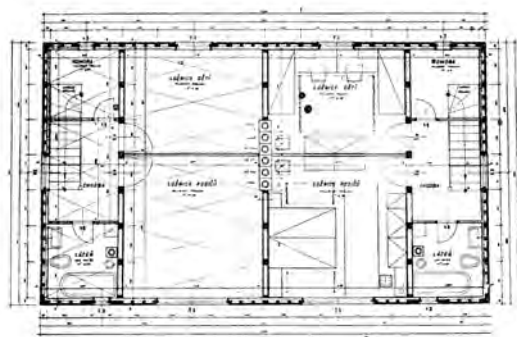
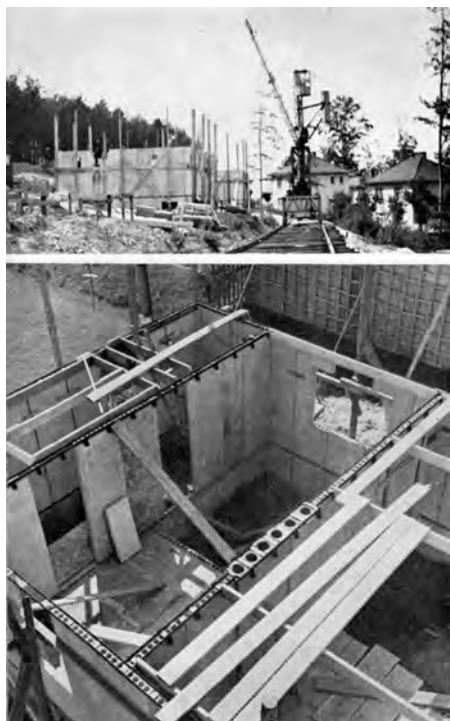
It was during this time that the first organized research on mass-produced prefabricated houses began in Zlín.⁴⁸ In 1940, the Department for Cast and Prefabricated Buildings (Oddělení pro lité a montované domky) was established.⁴⁹ As an indication of the lack of resources during the war, its first assignment was to research the construction of cast concrete houses using mixes lightened with waste materials such as slag, pumice, and sawdust. The following year, two duplexes were constructed with prefabricated hollow blocks (fig. 5.21).⁵⁰ These experimental houses were built near each other in the residential quar-



FIG. 5.21. DUPLEX MADE OF HOLLOW BLOCKS, 1941, SHOWN IN 2008.

ter called the Forest District (*Lesní čtvrť*), east of the factory. With their compact floor plans and cubic appearance, they resembled other Baťa houses of the 1930s, including the Benš-Jech winning competition entry from 1935, itself a take on the standard Baťa duplex from the 1920s.

In 1942, architect Miroslav Drofa, who had worked on residential projects in the Building Department since 1928, was called back from Slovakia to coordinate housing construction in Zlín, a position he would keep for more than twenty years.⁵¹ Under his direction, research was directed toward prefabrication and higher-density projects. Bohumil Kula and Hynek Adamec, from the Department for Cast and Prefabricated Buildings, designed the first experimental panelized prefabricated building, the Type A, in 1943.⁵² Between 1943 and 1945, three Type A duplexes were built using panels made at the building site and mounted onto a structural frame.⁵³ A movable crane running on a track along the street positioned the panels (figs. 5.22–5.24). This arrangement was similar to methods used in Germany and France before the war. Once again, just as with the Benš-Jech house from 1935, the duplex typology remained the same and only the method of production changed.



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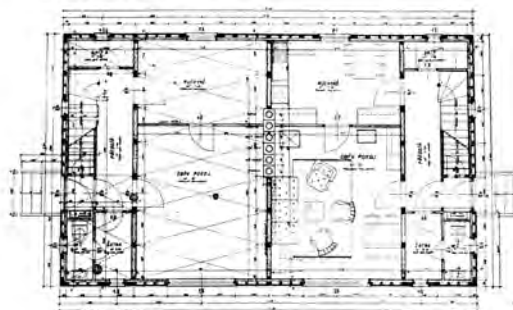


FIG. 5.22. HYNEK ADAMEC AND BOHUMIL KULA, TYPE A DUPLEX, ZLÍN, 1943–1945.

FIG. 5.23. GROUND FLOOR (*BOTTOM*) AND SECOND FLOOR (*TOP*), ZLÍN, 1943–1945.

FIG. 5.24. TYPE A DUPLEX, SHOWN IN 2008 AFTER FACADE REHABILITATION.



FIG. 5.25. VLADIMÍR KARFÍK, FRANTIŠEK GAHURA, ANTONÍN VÍTEK, AND JIŘÍ VOŽENÍLEK, MASTER PLAN FOR ZLÍN, 1946.

THE TWO-YEAR PLAN IN ZLÍN

After the war, the situation in Zlín was never the same. With President Beneš's Nationalization Decree in October 1945, the remaining assets of the Baťa firm were nationalized. The Department for Cast and Prefabricated Buildings became the Department of Prefabricated Buildings in the new national enterprise, indicating a shift in emphasis.⁵⁴ Despite the loss of the Baťa family's leadership, the Building Department continued its work, and its first priority was reimagining the war-damaged city on a regional and national scale. In a 1947 article, Jiří Voženílek claimed that Zlín had suffered more than other any Czech city in the war, not only from the bombings but also through the loss of productivity and housing construction that would have occurred if the war had never happened.⁵⁵

A team including Vladimír Kurfík, František Gahura, Antonín Vítek, and Jiří Voženílek quickly went to work on a new master plan for the city, although Kurfík and Gahura left Zlín in 1946 before the work was complete (fig. 5.25).⁵⁶ Voženílek, who would take over as director of the Building Department in 1946, had proposed urban plans based on Miliutin's linear city concept as early as 1932, when he was part of the Architectural Working Group. His influ-

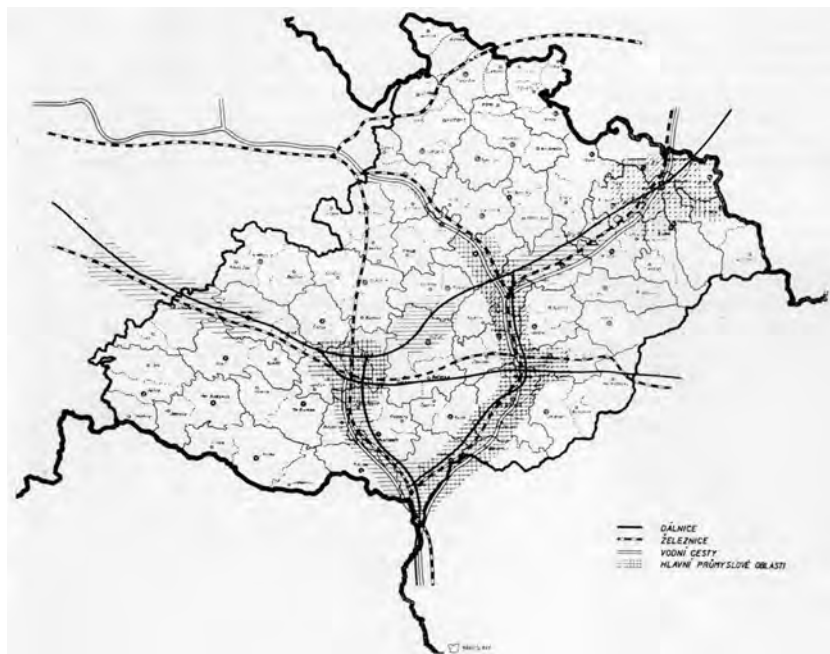


FIG. 5.26. PLAN TO CONNECT ZLÍN TO THE REST OF THE COUNTRY THROUGH A NEW TRANSPORTATION NETWORK, 1946. THE KEY READS “HIGHWAYS, RAILWAYS, CANALS, MAIN INDUSTRIAL ZONE.”

ence can be seen in this plan, which emphasized Zlín’s regional importance and its connections to other cities in the valley, such as Otrokovice, which was on the national rail line and was the site of a Bata factory and small settlement. Among the group’s proposals were the creation of a Moravian industrial belt and a regional transportation network, with highways, canals, and rail lines connecting Ostrava, Zlín, and Brno to Bohemia and Prague to the west (fig. 5.26).⁵⁷ Designs were also completed for an expansion of the commercial district so that it could include more cultural buildings and public services and an elevated pedestrian walkway over the main thoroughfare to connect the residential districts with the factory.⁵⁸ Finally, the master plan proposed a change in emphasis for housing production, encouraging more vertical construction near the city center east of the factory and limiting family house construction to “multi-unit prefabricated buildings.”⁵⁹

Because of the aggressive master plan and the resources made available by the national enterprise, Zlín was the site of many of the first housing projects to be completed in Czechoslovakia after the war. From a new home in Bratislava, where he was a founding member of the new Department of Architecture at the Slovak University of Technology in Bratislava, Karfík commuted



FIG. 5.27. VLADIMÍR KARFÍK, FUČÍK QUARTER UNDER CONSTRUCTION, ZLÍN, 1947.

back and forth to Zlín over the next year to supervise construction of twelve three-story apartment buildings he designed as part of the city's planned eastward expansion (fig. 5.27).⁶⁰ The Scandinavian-inspired buildings were designed in four to seven segments with six apartments in each.⁶¹ To accommodate the north-south slope of the site, each of the east-west facing segments stepped down the incline and was offset about two feet. The offset emphasized the distinct segments, creating strong shadow lines on the façades and giving the impression of a series of attached row houses rather than a single long building, such as functionalist architects might have designed in the 1930s (fig. 5.28). Inside, the three-room units contained 68 square meters (732 square feet) of living space with two bedrooms, a living room, galley kitchen, bathroom, and a west-facing balcony (fig. 5.29).⁶² The balcony could be accessed through the living room, as well as seen through the kitchen window, promoted as a useful feature for parents.⁶³ This outdoor space was a critical amenity to help ease the transition from houses to apartments. A few larger apartments, which had an office and an extra large living room, anchored the northern end of the buildings to accommodate families with more than three children or someone who worked at home.

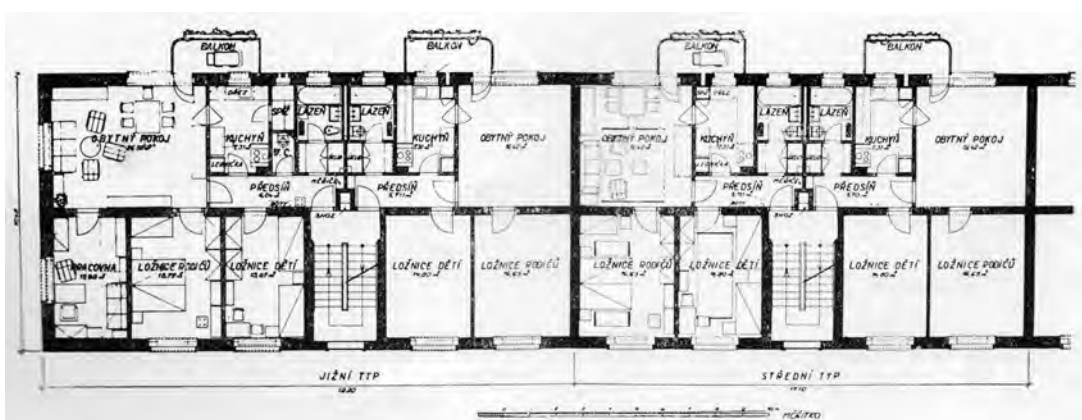


FIG. 5.28. FUČÍK QUARTER BUILDING STEPPING DOWN THE SLOPE WITH SHIFTING SEGMENTS, ZLÍN, 2006.

FIG. 5.29. PLAN OF A FUČÍK QUARTER BUILDING, ZLÍN, 1946–1947.

The individual doorways were marked by relief panels with images of “flowers, animals, historical reminiscences, and the like” that students at the Academy of Fine Arts in Prague had made (fig. 5.30). According to Karfík, this type of decoration gave the project a “folksy” touch.⁶⁴ The relief panels also appeared on his 1955 project for a hybrid panel building in Bratislava and over the doorways of the G-buildings in Gottwaldov in 1954 and Prague the next year. According to Martin Strakoš, this practice recalled the medieval tradition of using images, rather than words or numbers, as commercial signposts and address markers.⁶⁵

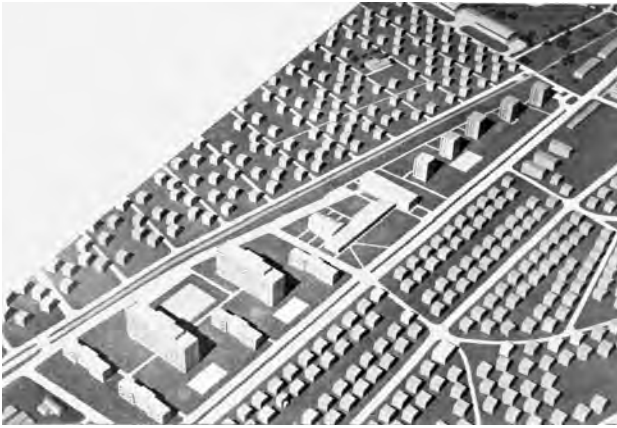


FIG. 5.30. RELIEF PANEL OVER THE DOORWAY IN THE FUČÍK QUARTER, ZLÍN, 2006. THE CANOPY IS NOT ORIGINAL, AND THE DOOR HAS BEEN REPLACED.

FIG. 5.31. MODEL OF NEW VERTICAL DISTRICT EAST OF DOWNTOWN ZLÍN, 1948.

Working with the master plan and its specification for more vertical construction, Miroslav Drofa designed the city's first high-rise residential buildings in 1946, and they were to be built on a piece of land just to the east of downtown (fig. 5.31). The plan called for traditional Baťa construction methods, including a reinforced concrete structure with glass and brick infill. The first group of buildings included five identical eight-story "tower blocks," built on a main thoroughfare across from Karfík's low-rise apartment buildings (fig. 5.32). The towers were square in plan, with four large one-bedroom, 68-square-meter (732-square-foot) apartments arranged around a central stair and eleva-

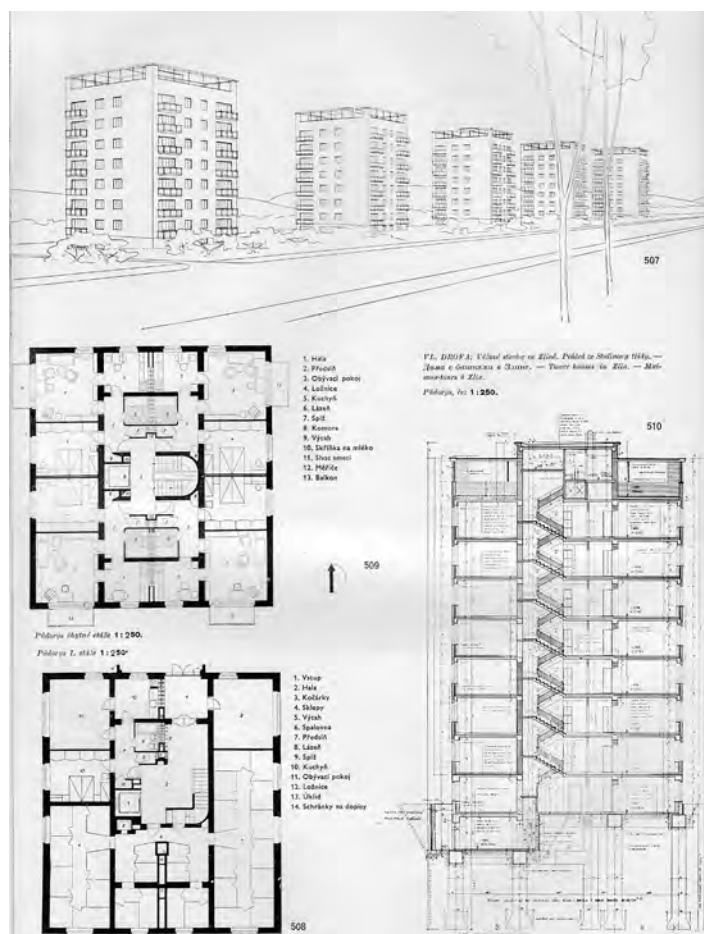


FIG. 5.32. MIROSLAV DROFA, PLAN FOR TOWER BLOCKS, ZLÍN, 1946–1947.

tor core. Each identical living room had a balcony, although they were placed asymmetrically in plan, with two on the south façade, one facing east and one west. This arrangement was achieved by moving the balconies that would have been on the north side in a symmetrical plan to the east and west façades for better light. The buildings sat in a green space, set back from a busy street, providing a serene and peaceful environment that once again recalled Scandinavian architecture of the period, as well as Le Corbusier's concept of the "tower in a park" (fig. 5.33).⁶⁶

While Drofa was working on the tower block project, he was also designing the "Morýs buildings," the two most dramatic additions to the Zlín sky-



FIG. 5.33. TOWER BLOCK, ZLÍN, 2006.

line after the war. Located on relatively high ground and visible from many of the existing residential neighborhoods, these apartment houses were finished in 1947 and then renamed in honor of Zlín's Communist mayor, Vilem Morýs, who was killed in a car crash in December 1948 (fig. 5.34). Each of the nine-story, double-loaded corridor buildings had ninety-seven apartments facing east or west—sixty-seven two-room units and thirty three-room units (fig. 5.35). Services, including a restaurant, day-care center, and game room, were located on the ground floor.⁶⁷ Most of the units also featured the same balcony style as the Karfík buildings, although in this case, the corner units were the largest, with a living room that opened onto a deck that could be seen

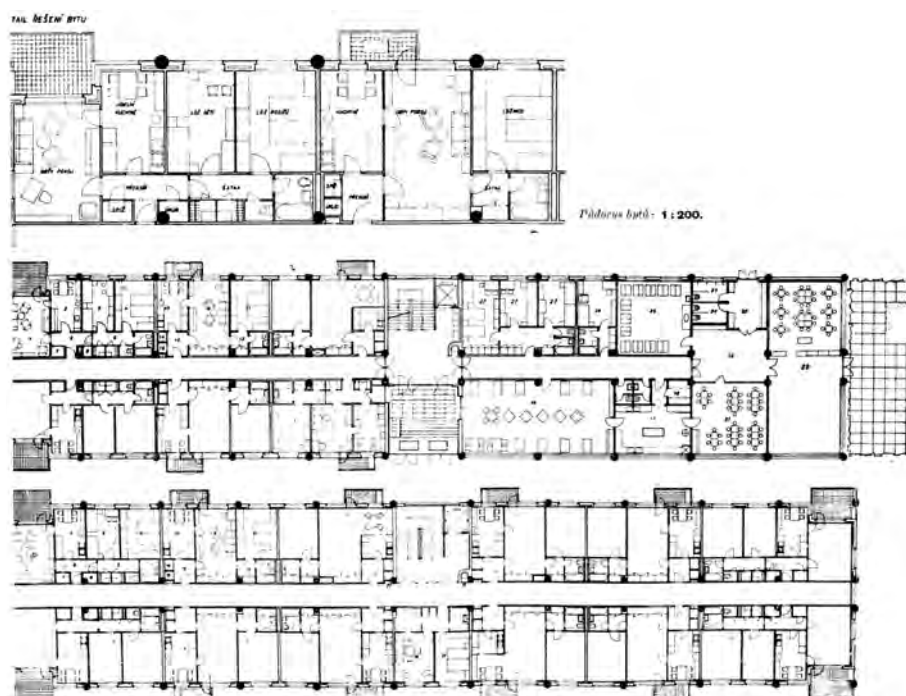


FIG. 5.34. MIROSLAV DROFA, THE “MORÝS BUILDINGS,” 1946–1947.

FIG. 5.35. PLANS FOR THE MORÝS BUILDINGS: UNIT PLAN (TOP), GROUND-FLOOR PLAN (MIDDLE), AND TYPICAL FLOOR (BOTTOM).



FIG. 5.36. JIŘÍ VOŽENÍLEK, COLLECTIVE HOUSE, ZLÍN, 1947–1951.



FIG. 5.37. DINING ROOM AT THE COLLECTIVE HOUSE, ZLÍN.

through a side window from the adjacent kitchen. As architectural historian Petr Všecká writes, the Morýs buildings continued “the Baťa building tradition in the changed circumstances of the postwar era. The idea of the garden city was transformed into a new scale, and living in tall buildings introduced into Zlín’s space an urban gradation, contrast, and ‘big-city’ spirit.”⁶⁸

The last large project of this period was Jiří Voženílek’s Collective House from 1947–1951, which was similar to the Morýs buildings in scale and proportion (fig. 5.36). As was typical with the collective house type, the units in the building had no kitchens, only a small sink and stove, and, similar to the Litvínov Collective House, the apartments themselves were organized for family living, with one or two private bedrooms. Community amenities included a roof deck, full-service dining room, bar, and laundry on the ground floor, as well as an elementary school and nursery in an adjoining building (figs. 5.37 and 5.38). Stylistically, Voženílek was more self-conscious than other Zlín architects in his attempt to mimic the factory architecture. The building had a thick, exposed reinforced concrete frame, high-contrast brick infill, and horizontal bands of windows with alternating balconies. The central staircase was enclosed in glass block, an awkward choice for an already busy façade.⁶⁹

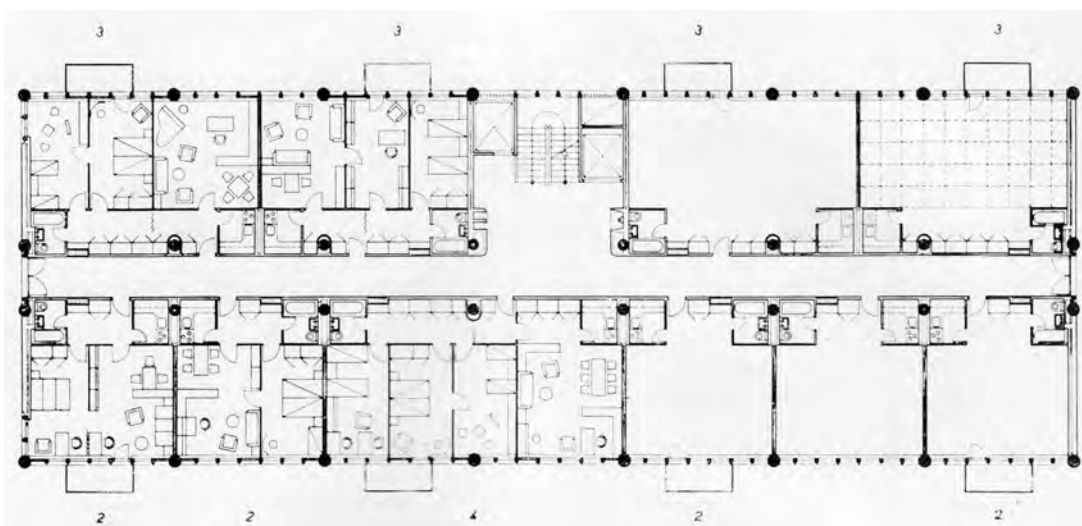


FIG. 5.38. PLAN OF COLLECTIVE HOUSE, ZLÍN.

In comparison to the more subtle projects of Karfik and Drofa, Voženílek's building, which would be his last individual commission, lacked the elegant proportions and sensitivities of the other Two-Year Plan buildings in Zlín.

In addition to these large projects, Kula and Adamec from the Department of Prefabricated Buildings continued their work on panelized duplexes; fifteen more were completed in 1947 and 1948.⁷⁰ They were constructed with lightweight hollow panels held together with wire and temporary scaffolding until roof panels could be secured to stabilize the structure (fig. 5.39). According to Voženílek, "this working method hindered the assembly and raised the total cost of the building."⁷¹ Kula made an important technological advance in 1947 when he designed two duplexes made out of ribbed panels that were bolted together from the inside; this system became known as Type K.⁷² The key to this method was starting the assembly at the corners, using designated corner pieces with anchors embedded in them to attach the bolts; additional panels would then fit together where the ribs met (fig. 5.40). Stability was still a concern, however, since the ribs and bolts carried most of the building load. In 1948, Kula used this system again to build four row houses.

Although it would take another five years, and they would have to weather political, economic, and professional changes along the way, Kula and Adamec continued their work on prefabricated housing at the research institute in Zlín (renamed Gottwaldov in 1949) until they succeeded in construct-

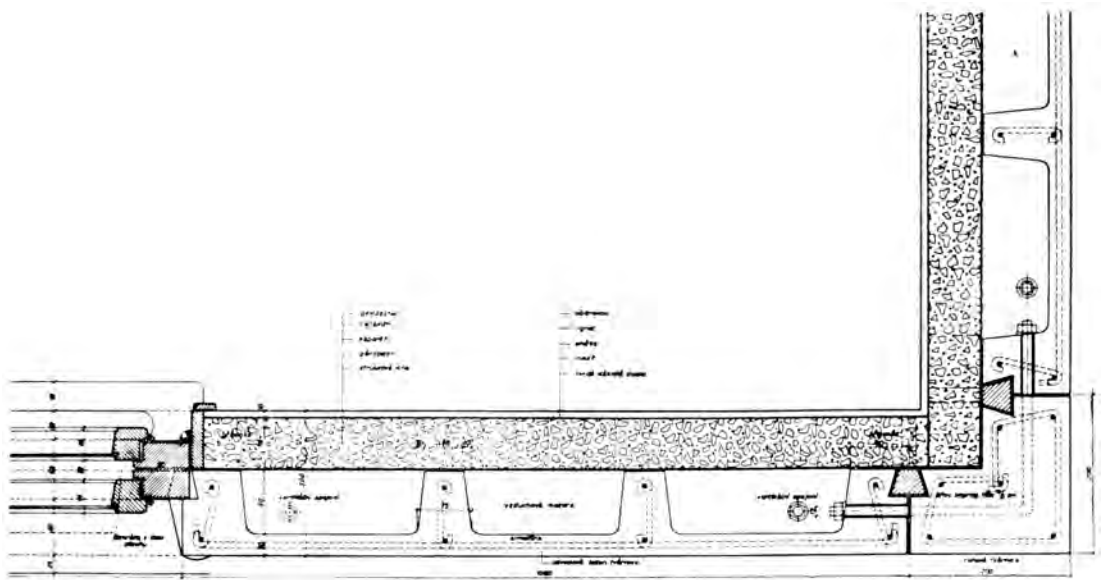


FIG. 5.39. HÝNEK ADAMEC, TYPE A BUILDING, ZLÍN, 1947, SHOWN IN 2008.

FIG. 5.40. BOHUMIL KULA, TYPE K BOLTING DETAIL.

ing the first panelák in 1953. However, it would take the restructuring of the architectural administration, changes in the distribution of building materials, and a shift in architects' attitudes for this technology to penetrate the building culture of Stavoprojekt on a national scale.

THE CONDITIONS FOR INDUSTRIALIZATION

Just as in other cities, the building boom of the Two-Year Plan in Zlín ended with the dramatic political events of 1948 and the restructuring of the building industry. Jiří Voženílek left for Prague in the fall to begin his new position as director of Stavoprojekt. During the three years he held this position, he embedded ideas of typification and standardization, developed in Zlín, into the design culture of the new state-run system. Issues of production, and prefabrication in particular, were secondary to the immediate goals of establishing a building module, a series of building types, and a system for assessing labor and material needs.

The decision to focus on typification and standardization, rather than prefabrication, can be understood in relation to Voženílek's own professional experiences. When he left Zlín for Prague, he brought with him a very particular understanding of the development of housing types and technologies, one shaped largely by the Baťa Building Department. Voženílek considered typification and standardization to be design methodologies that opened possibilities through their universality. Interchangeable parts could be used to various and creative ends as space-making tools. This was a conceptual approach to design developed through his contact with Gahura, Karfík, and Drofa, who, between them, had spent more than fifty years exploring the many possibilities of the modular Baťa building system. He also valued the use of building types and had seen neighborhoods built successfully with repeated, identical buildings, including the Karfík and Drofa projects of 1946–1947. Therefore, when Voženílek came to Prague in 1948 to “organize the socialist design sector” on the Zlín model, the implications of this directive were multiple, complex, and far-reaching.⁷³ Not only did he bring expertise in operating a state-owned design office, he also had strong ideas about the nature and potential of typification and standardization, not as threats to architecture but as tools that could transform the practice of architecture on a nationwide scale.

With the publication of typification guides for all building types in 1950, Karel Janů and Voženílek succeeded in their goal of reorienting the building sector, away from individual commissions and toward industry and mass production. The changing political and economic climate, however, soon shifted the architectural administration's attention toward the Soviet Union and socialist realism. As part of this transition, Janů and Voženílek were forced out of their positions in 1951, and they went to work in research and

development; both would return to high-level administrative posts in 1956. As architects working in the Sorela style gained prominence, it appeared that Stavoprojekt's technocratic approach and commitment to typification and standardization would be abandoned. Yet there were other mechanisms at work, out of the public eye, that continued to sustain these working methods, including a professional restructuring within Stavoprojekt that strengthened organizational support for them within the larger building sector.

One of the first issues to be addressed in 1951 was the process of bringing a project from design to completion. Until the end of the Czechoslovak Building Works, the traditional roles of architect, contractor, client, and investor had remained intact. Stavoprojekt architects worked with clients such as ministries, national committees, municipalities, and national enterprises, and funding came from a combination of public institutions and nationalized corporations. Multiple construction companies and specialty building concerns were in operation, allowing projects to be bid out competitively. Over the next four years, the organizations responsible for investment, design, and construction slowly consolidated.

Continuing problems around Ostrava were the catalyst for changing investment processes, since the existing system had failed to yield significant results by 1952. It was clear that the piecemeal regional and corporate funding structures already in place would not be sufficient for the scale of the 1951 master plan for Nová Ostrava. In May 1952, the Department of Central Investment (Odbor hlavního investora) was established in the Ministry of the Interior (Ministerstvo vnitra). Its primary responsibility was to oversee construction around Ostrava, including industrial infrastructure, roads, and housing. It eventually expanded to oversee work across the country.⁷⁴

Building enterprises and Stavoprojekt followed another path after the Czechoslovak Building Works was disbanded. They were consolidated and placed under the control of the new Ministry of Building Industry, one of the successor ministries to the Ministry of Technology.⁷⁵ In this reconfiguration, building industry professionals, including contractors, were placed within a single organization, and competition disappeared. At the same time, Stavoprojekt was set up as an independent national enterprise under the supervision of an executive board in Prague. Given the failures of the first Stavoprojekt administration to increase productivity and efficiency, as well as its slow acceptance of socialist realism, there was a sense of urgency to these changes.

By the spring of 1953, there were still no signs of improvement. The government identified "inadequate cooperation" between the various sectors of the building industry as the primary reason for widespread failures in delivering buildings on time and within budget.⁷⁶ In May, plans were made to form

a committee to find a structural solution to these problems. Given that this was just two months after the deaths of Stalin and Gottwaldov and political tensions were high, publicly exposing the deficiencies in the building sector could have had dire consequences, and these plans were kept confidential.⁷⁷ In June 1953, Prime Minister Viliam Široký personally presided over the first meeting of what was named the Government Committee for Construction in the Office of the Prime Minister (Úřad předsednictva vlády - Vládní výbor pro výstavbu).⁷⁸ Deputy Prime Minister Oldřich Beran, who would become minister of state controls later that year and then minister of building industry in 1956, oversaw the committee's work for the next two years. One of its most important tasks was to implement a December 1952 government decree to lower the cost of housing units by 20 percent.⁷⁹

The meeting coincided with significant social and economic changes in the country. Rationing, which had persisted since 1945, ended in 1953. A major currency reform attempted to stabilize prices on consumer goods by taking money out of circulation. Despite political rhetoric about the reform being a sign of growth in the economy, it wiped out the savings accounts of many industrial and agricultural workers, who had kept their money because there were so few consumer goods to buy. In June 1953, this move led to strikes at more than 125 factories and mass arrests in Plzeň. Martin Myant has called the unrest “a serious warning to the Czechoslovak authorities.... Up to that time they had treated the level of investment and arms production as the priority. Consumption had become a residual. From mid-1953 onwards the need to ensure stability and at least a small increase in living standards always set a limit to the level of investment.”⁸⁰

In this environment, the housing sector needed to show improvement quickly. The Government Committee for Construction soon made recommendations that resulted in another round of reorganization for all building enterprises. Stavoprojekt deputy director Otakar Nový described this as an unsettled time for designers when “the successor organizations [to the Czechoslovak Building Works] overcame questions of the central administration of their work often with great difficulty, namely in housing and civic architecture.”⁸¹ He referred to a “conveyor belt” of administrations as Stavoprojekt was moved between three ministries in just six months.⁸² The third move coincided with an October 1953 government decree to devote more attention to the “care of man”; one of its provisions was to “increase investment in housing production.”⁸³ At this point, architects, investors, and researchers were placed within an organization responsible for regional development; this change was philosophically consistent with the original concept of the Model Housing Developments in 1946.

Throughout this period of instability, research progressed on the tech-

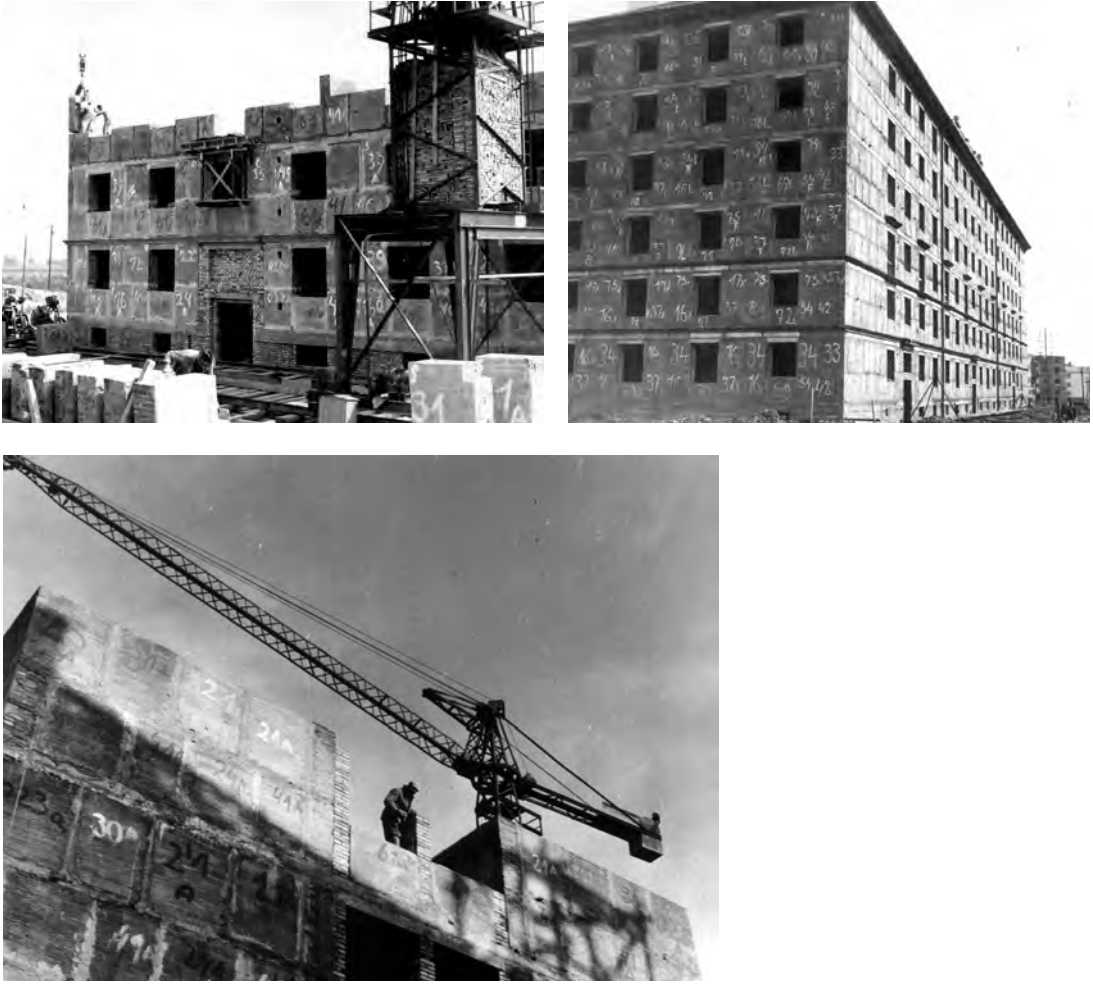
nological aspects of industrial building production. Work continued at the Stavoprojekt research institutes, including the Education and Typification Institute (Studijní a typizační ústav), which published the yearly typification guides. T-series apartment buildings were an increasingly large portion of housing production after 1950.⁸⁴ As Sorela penetrated the design culture of the local Stavoprojekt offices, decorative elements with classical and natural motifs such as pilasters, relief plaques, and ornamental cornices were added to façades. Due to labor shortages, artisans were not available for this work on a massive scale, and industries started producing Sorela-styled prefabricated elements made to attach onto the T-series buildings. The ornamental pieces were typically made of gypsum, sheet metal, and wrought iron; objects such as stoneware vases were also produced as outdoor sculpture (fig. 5.41).⁸⁵ Despite the stylistic flourishes, the underlying concept, derived from thinkers including Lakomý and Kroha, remained the same—repetition of types decorated in a nationally appropriate style.

At the same time prefabrication was being used to further the goals of Sorela, new construction methods, unconnected to a particular style, were also being explored. Experiments began with “flow construction” (*proudová stavění*), in which workers would be assigned a specific task to repeat rather than being responsible for construction of a single building from start to finish.⁸⁶ According to Janů, this was “the transfer of the state-of-the-art form of the assembly line with its organizational strategies and distribution of labor to the building industry.”⁸⁷ Beyond the general interest in such methods among modern architects, the concept of flow construction in the Czechoslovak case may have originated directly with the minister of building industry, Emanuel Šlechta, who had lived in the United States in the 1920s and was a specialist on American mass production.⁸⁸

Although applied at the scale of a large apartment building rather than a row house or single-family house, flow construction was similar to the



FIG. 5.41. PREFABRICATED STONEWARE VASE, 1952.



FIGS. 5.42–5.44. PORUBA CONSTRUCTION SITE, C. 1954.

building method Gropius employed at Törten-Dessau and later American builders such as Levitt & Sons used in their Levittown projects. When writing about the first ten years of socialist housing production, Voženilek noted that flow construction was first used in Ostrava in 1950, then it “stagnated” in 1951 and 1952, until interest was revived in 1953.⁸⁹ Construction photographs from Poruba’s first district illustrate the industrialized methods used in many Sorela buildings (figs. 5.42–5.44). A year later, it was utilized as the primary construction method for the housing and infrastructure of Dukla, a new neighborhood in Pardubice, an industrial city sixty miles east of Prague.⁹⁰ From that point for-



FIG. 5.45. BOHUMIL KULA, TYPE K, 1947, SHOWN IN 2008.

FIG. 5.46. BOHUMIL KULA AND HYNEK ADAMEC, PREFABRICATED BUILDING WITH BOLTED PANELS AND STRAPS, 2008.

ward, flow construction was the basis for the further development of mechanized building production.⁹¹

Throughout this transitional period, the architects in the Department of Prefabricated Buildings continued their research in Zlín. In 1949, Kula built a prototype of a fourplex using prefabricated ribbed panels (fig. 5.45). The following year, Kula and Adamec completed work on a single three-story, eighteen-unit apartment building using the same technology.⁹² Straps were added around the horizontal joints for lateral stability (fig. 5.46). There were also balconies on the back façade built as self-supporting open boxes, pre-



FIG. 5.47. BALCONIES, 2008.

sumably because the bolted panels could not withstand the additional weight (fig. 5.47). However, the cost of the building was determined to be too high, so it was the last building constructed with this method.⁹³ In 1950, the administration of the Department of Prefabricated Buildings was taken out of the Svit Company (as the nationalized Baťa enterprise was called), and the department became a research institute within the Czechoslovak Building Works; additional offices were then opened in Prague and Brno. After Stavoprojekt became an independent national enterprise, the research institute was renamed the Institute of Prefabricated Buildings (Ústav montovaných staveb) in January 1952 and came under Stavoprojekt's purview.⁹⁴

Jiří Voženílek did not lose sight of this research during his years in Prague. When his tenure as the head of the Stavoprojekt administration ended in late 1951, he became director of the new Institute of Architecture and Town Planning (Ústav architektury a územního plánování), which would

become the Research Institute for Construction and Architecture (Výzkumný ústav výstavby a architektury) in 1954.⁹⁵ This was the same institute that Zdeněk Lakomý's architectural theory group had joined in July 1951.⁹⁶ Starting in 1952, one aspect of the work of the Institute of Architecture and Town Planning was to organize "theoretical groups" in all of the Stavoprojekt offices and, in conjunction with the ideological campaigns of *Architektura ČSR* and *Sovětská architektura*, to promote the historical study of local architecture as a primary component of Sorela.⁹⁷ This was an aspect of design that had been purposefully underplayed in the first Stavoprojekt administration but could no longer be ignored.

A less heralded aspect of the work at the Institute for Architecture and Town Planning was technical research on building methods. In 1952, in the midst of the most vigorous push toward socialist realism, Voženílek, as the first director, was still putting forward his agenda of typification and standardization. In an article in *Architektura ČSR*, accompanied by illustrations of prefabricated Sorela façade ornaments, he continued to push for a more thorough theorization of the nature of these technologies.⁹⁸ Echoing his commentary on the standardization of brick sizes, Voženílek challenged architects to define the terms of their use of prefabrication, asking what was "driving" this transformation. He proposed that there were "two paths to the industrialization of building." The first would be to use factory-made prefabricated elements to construct buildings on site. The second was the "full-scale mechanization of building work," so that only a finished product was transported to the site.⁹⁹

Voženílek argued that although the second method was appropriate for bridges, road infrastructure, and simple buildings, the success of architectural typification depended on the application of the first method. He proposed the use of a limited number of universal building elements—"the maximum number of structural variations from the minimum number of industrially produced construction components and parts."¹⁰⁰ This logic extended to the development of panel technology. He advocated for the use of nonstructural panels, since they were cheaper to produce, lighter, easier to transport, and allowed more flexibility in design than structural panels.¹⁰¹ Voženílek referred to the example of the Soviet Union, where investment in large factories and an increase in the availability of labor had led to advances in the design of tall buildings; he was likely referring to Moscow's "Seven Sisters." In the Czechoslovak case, he argued that the proper course was "the coordination of the volume of typification with the typification of components and parts, so that the same component could be used for all sorts of . . . buildings." This would increase "the possibilities of architectural interpretation of typified buildings."¹⁰² So, just as in the earlier debates, Voženílek brought an architectural point of view to a discussion that would soon become entrenched in issues of

efficiency and economy. Despite the appeal of Voženílek's position in terms of creative design possibilities, he failed to counter the push for structural panel technology that had already taken hold.

As director of the Institute for Architecture and Town Planning, Voženílek was able to return to his earlier interest in architecture as a scientific pursuit and the quantitative methods of the Architectural Working Group.¹⁰³ As an aspect of the technical research conducted under his leadership, the organization collected data and performed analysis on the various methods being proposed for new construction. The institute's Typification Group in Prague (Skupina typisace Praha) published a manual on the industrial production of buildings in 1953. Coauthored by Stanislav Sůva and Vladimír Červenka, the future head of the Central Administration for Housing and Civic Building (Ústřední správa pro bytovou a občanskou výstavbu), the text offered a comprehensive evaluation of the current research on all types of prefabricated buildings in Czechoslovakia and made comparisons to examples in the Soviet Union. It is the best and most thorough surviving account of Czechoslovak experiments in prefabricated construction in the early 1950s and shows the challenges that lay ahead in adopting panel technology.¹⁰⁴

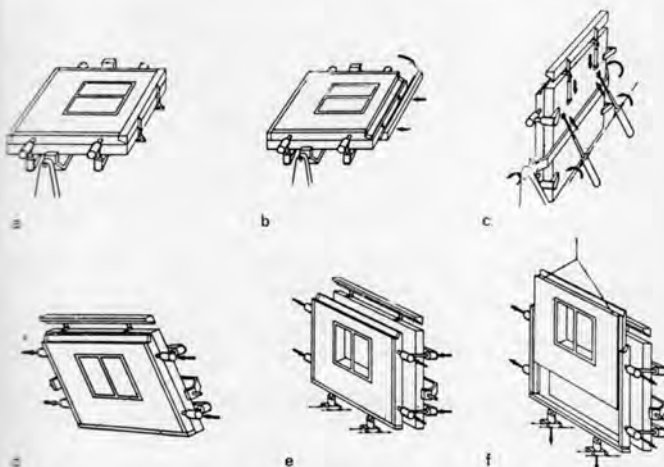
EARLY PANEL TECHNOLOGY

Postwar interest in panel technology was not unique to Czechoslovakia. Architects across Europe, east and west, saw the technology as a possible way to provide decent and affordable mass housing. In capitalist countries, it was one of many architectural ideas being explored; innovations were also being made in the design of single-family houses, low-rise high-density housing, and upscale urban apartments. This variety was in marked contrast to the Soviet Union and its satellites, where panel construction was the primary and often only accepted option. For the most part, panel technology in Western Europe was used for publicly financed social housing. Nonstructural panel technologies, such as reinforced concrete skeletons with mounted façade panels, were the most common, although the French aggressively pursued multiple methods, including structural panels.

French building engineer Raymond Camus patented the world's first multi-unit structural panel building in 1948.¹⁰⁵ The technology, called the Camus system, was used to rebuild sections of Le Havre in 1949.¹⁰⁶ Three hundred housing units in Evreux, constructed in 1955 using the similar Coignet system, were the first images of French structural panel buildings to appear in the Czechoslovak press; they were published in *Architektura ČSR* in 1956 (fig. 5.48).¹⁰⁷ The same year, in an article in the journal *Annals de l'Institut Technique du Bâtiment et des Travaux Publics* (Annals of the Institute of Technical Building and Public Works), Camus reported building eight housing

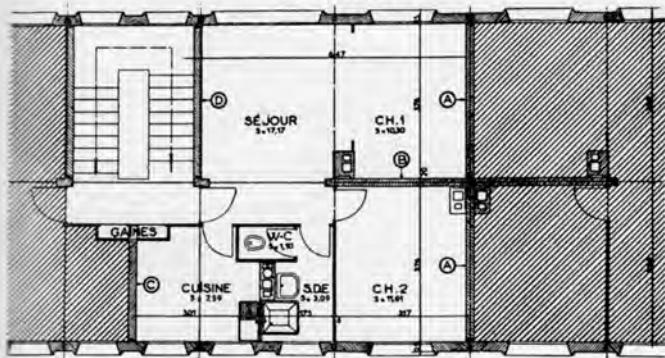


341 Francouzský montovaný obytný dům. Pohled na dokončený dům



342 Postup vyjmutí obvodního panelu ze stroje. - a) Dokončený panel ve vodorovné poloze. - b) Obvodní horní hranu. - c) Zvedání panelu do vodorovné polohy. - d) Panel ve svislé poloze. - e) Odložení panelu z rámu od zadní stěny stroje. - f) Vytlačení panelu z rámu

343 Půdorys patra



FRANCOUZSKÝ MONTOVANÝ PANELOVÝ OBYTNÝ DŮM

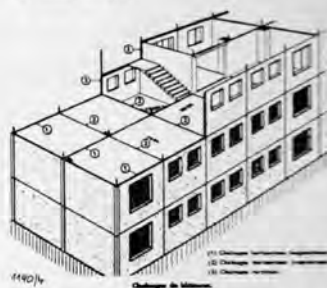
V červencovém a srpnovém čísle (ročník 1955) časopisu *Annales de l'institut technique du bâtiment et des travaux publics* je uveřejněna přednáška E. Fougere o stavbě 300 bytových jednotek s montovanou panelovou konstrukcí v městě Evreux.

Návrh domu je vytvořen s minimálním počtem konstruktivních prvků (panelů). Jeden byt je složen pouze z 22 prvků. Jsou to tyto prvky:

1. Železobetonové stropní panely rozměrů $3,28 \times 3,86 \times 0,19$ m s rovným horním i spodním povrchem.
2. Obvodové stěnové panely rozměrů $3,299 \times 2,699 \times 0,25$ m složené ze čtyř vrstev a to: z 2 cm tl. betonové vrstvy se speciálním světlým šterkem, z 5 cm tl. vrstvy normálního betonu, z 15 cm tl. vrstvy betonu puzzolánového, tvořícího tepelnou izolaci a konečně z 3 cm tl. vrstvy puzzolánového betonu s vápnem, zabraňující vlnutí. Vnější 2 cm tl. vrstva tvořící omítku je po vyjmutí z formy zbrusena pískem, vnitřní povrch je hladký a po montáži se pouze maluje.
3. Vnitřní nosné panely jsou železobetonové s minimální výstuží.
4. Schodišťové panely.
5. Bloky z puzzolánového betonu pro instalaci a průduchy.

Při výrobě prvků byla věnována velká pozornost smíchování betonu a to z toho důvodu, aby byly dodrženy přesné rozměry jednotlivých panelů. Výrobu jednotlivých prvků podávalo se zvládnout s přesností 1 mm.

Rozměry prvků jsou voleny tak, aby se jich několik dalo vyrobit jedním strojem a mohlo být proto všech 22 prvků vyrobeno jen na šesti velkých a čtyřech malých plus automatických strojích vytápěných parou. Jejich různé úkony jako vibrace, provedení stýčných spar a vyjímání hotových výrobků řídí jeden dělník příslušnými pákami z řídicí desky.



344 Skladové schéma budovy. 1 - Horizontální spoje podlaží, 2 - horizontální spoje přítl. 3 - spoje vlnit

Stavba domu o 40 bytech v pěti podlažích, výměry 550 m² trvala pouze tři měsíce.

Jak přednášející uvedl, setkávají se snahy o industrializaci stavebnictví ve Francii se značnými obtížemi a těžko se překonává konservativní smýšlení investorů i schvalujících orgánů.

V diskusi, která po přednášce následovala, bylo řečeno, že doprava prefabrikátů tohoto druhu je hospodárná do vzdálenosti 50 až 60 km. Přednášející nemohl sdělit cenu bytové jednotky, ale prohlásil, že takto provedené domy jsou o 10–15 % levnější než domy provedené tradičně. Výstavba zvláštní továrny na panely je ve francouzských poměrech ekonomická teprve při stavbě 1000 bytových jednotek.

(*Annales de l'institut technique du bâtiment et des travaux publics* č. 7 a 8/1955)

FIG. 5.48. EVREUX PANEL BUILDING AS SHOWN IN *ARCHITEKTURA ČSR* (1956).

units a day around Paris.¹⁰⁸ In 1957, a short illustrated text about the Camus system appeared in *Architektura ČSR*; the author stated that it was based on the aforementioned French text (fig. 5.49).¹⁰⁹ Camus's recent visit to the Soviet Union was also noted, implicitly aligning him and his company's mission with communism.¹¹⁰ The Coignet and Camus buildings bore a resemblance to Czechoslovak examples—with similarly scaled panels and bays, as well as similar stair placement and overall building proportions—although there is no evidence to suggest that Czech or Slovak architects were aware of the systems before the articles appeared. A 1958 Czechoslovak publication on international trends in industrial housing provided more information on both systems.¹¹¹ Here the Camus system was referred to as “similar to our G-buildings,” the type designed by Kula and Adamec in Gottwaldov.¹¹²

Architectural historians and the general public have long assumed that Soviet architects forced panel technology on unwilling architects in the Eastern Bloc after they had mastered it at home.¹¹³ The situation was much more complex, however. Since the 1930s, Soviet architects had been trying to develop fully prefabricated multistory apartment buildings, made with large blocks, precast elements, and various types of panels. Large block construction had been used for several Moscow apartment buildings in the early 1940s, and there were some one-, two-, and three-story structural panel buildings erected in Magnitogorsk in 1949. A number of experimental skeleton-frame panel constructions were also completed in Moscow and Kiev.¹¹⁴ By 1953, however, Soviet architects had not found a viable technical solution for taller structures, one to replace typical masonry apartment buildings on a nationwide scale. Although the Camus Company achieved some success in Western Europe, especially in the 1960s, when they produced 20,000 units a year, the system was embraced most fully by the Soviet government, which commissioned the company to build 380 panel factories starting in 1959. Thirty million housing units were eventually built in the Soviet Union using this technology.¹¹⁵ It is not known why the French system was chosen over the Czechoslovak equivalent, although one can speculate that the Soviet market was simply too big for Czechoslovakia to take on, given its own difficulties producing enough housing units for a much smaller population.

The evolution of panel technologies in Czechoslovakia followed a different path than in the Soviet Union. Because of previous research in Zlín and the extent of typification and standardization achieved by the first Stavoprojekt administration, this area of the building sector was much more developed in Czechoslovakia than in the Soviet Union or other parts of the Eastern Bloc. Even so, panel technologies were still a minor aspect of the architectural research agenda until the early 1950s, when the nature of the planned economy and its requirements for quantitative measurements increased their

ARCHITEKTURA V ZAHRANIČÍ

FRANCOUZSKÉ PANELOVÉ DOMY „CAMUS“



650

V pařížském okrese se provádí výstavba panelových obytných domů tak zvanou Camusovou metodou. Autor této metody, který byl nedávno v Sovětském svazu, popsal zvrubně celý postup v čísle 101/1956 časopisu Annales de l'Institut Technique du Batiment et des Travaux Publics. Základní zásadou Camusovy



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metody je tovární výroba úplně dokončených prvků, jako stěn, příček, stropů a doprava těchto prvků na staveniště, kde se ihned provádí montáž. Tyto prvky, které váží až 7 t se dopravují na staveniště speciálními nákladními automobily a při stavbě se osazují jeřáby. Konstrukce obytných domů je bez skeletu.

Největší a nejnovější výrobní stavebních prvků, v jejímž čele působí R. Camus, je v Mon-

tessonu v pařížské oblasti. Byla vystavěna v letech 1954–1955 a v provozu je od června 1955. Výrobní prostranství má plochu 5 ha, zastavěná plocha činí 7.000 m².

Z prvků vyrobených v této továrně bylo v prostoru Clichy, Boulogne a Nanterre postaveno během šesti měsíců na tisíc bytů. Nákladní vozy, dopravující stavební prvky z továrny na stavbu, najezdily více než 90.000 km. Továrna má k dispozici 7 traktorů po 180 ks a 16 nákladních vozů o nosnosti 25 t se zvláštním zařízením pro dopravu a vykládání panelů na staveniště.

Složitější prvky jako obkládané stěny a stropní konstrukce se vyrábějí v horizontální poloze ve třech výrobních traktech továrny v Montessonu. Jednoduché panely se zhotovují ve skupinách ve vertikálních bateriích. Stěny o tloušťce 24 cm jsou z výztuženého betonu a mají vnější i vnitřní dokončovací úpravy. Příčky, které jsou betonové, mají tloušťku 18 cm a vyrábějí se rovněž s hladce dokončeným povrchem a s elektrickým vedením uvnitř. Stropy jsou z betonových panelů o tloušťce 13 cm s topnými tělesy uvnitř. Veškeré vyrobené prvky se pečlivě zkoušejí.

Práce na staveništi se skládá v podstatě z těchto etap: 1. příprava staveniště a zakládání, 2. montáž stavebních prvků, 3. dokončující práce.

Základy jsou vytvořeny z obvyklých normálních základových patek. Pouze na některých staveništích vyžadovala povaha spodních půd krátkých základových pilot. Na těchto základech spočívá suterénní zdivo, které je betonové. Betonuje se na místě do ocelového bednění až do úrovně přízemního podlaží.

V dalším stavebním postupu se pak pomocí jeřábů osazují prefabrikované stavební prvky. Tyto prvky se montují jeřáby o nosnosti 80 t/m, které uchopí panely přímo na vlečném voze a ukládají je na předepsané místo, kde se přidržují pomocí lan a podpěr. Jakmile je zajištěna jejich správná poloha, provedou zkušební pracovníci definitivní upevnění. Spojení panelů se sloupy se zajišťují pomocí výčnělků výztuže a výztuží sloupů, nebo spojek, které se vkládají na místě. Zlábky, kde se panely stýkají, se pak vyplňují betonem. Takto se dosahuje pevné nosné konstrukce z výztuženého betonu. Při montáži není vůbec třeba lešení a bednění se omezuje pouze na listy, kde se vybetonovávají styky panelů. Jeřáby se mohou otáčet i v poměrně velkém úhlu a soustava posunovacích desek umožňuje, že je není třeba demontovat a opět montovat při přemístění z jedné stavby na druhou. Jeden jeřáb osadí 30–45 panelů za



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den. Dokončující práce se pak provádějí obvyklým způsobem.

Na projektech domů, pro něž se vyrábějí stavební prvky ve výrobě v Montessonu, pracovala řada architektů jako Camelot, Crevel, Ricome, Zehrfuss a jiní. Projekty obsahují v podstatě dva typy obytných domů s orientací východ-západ a sever-jih. V každém typu domu jsou tři různé druhy bytů. Domy jsou pět až devítipodlažní. Konstrukce je vytvořena z nosných zdí příček. Stropní desky vystupují z průčelí 25 cm a tvoří tak pás nebo vy-



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stupují 1,40 m a pak nesou balkon. Celkový počet prvků je 186 a vyrábějí se v 50 různých formách. Byt má zpravidla ústřední vytápění ve stropích, teplou a studenou vodu, instalační buňku se sprchou, umyvadlem a WC, výlevku s dvojitou políčkou a vestavěnou skříňkou dole. Dále je v každé obytné místnosti jedna vestavěná skříň. Podlahy jsou linoleové.

F. Stránecký.

FIG. 5.49. CAMUS SYSTEM AS SHOWN IN ARCHITEKTURA ČSR (1957). THE ARTICLE APPEARS IN A SECTION CALLED "ARCHITECTURE IN FOREIGN COUNTRIES."

importance in socialist countries around the world. At this point, the legacy of the Baťa research centers was critical. Experiments were quickly undertaken at multiple sites, and all were led by architects with a connection to Baťa—the Institute of Prefabricated Buildings in Gottwaldov, the Institute of Building Materials and Construction in Bratislava (Ústav stavebních hmot a konstrukcí), and the Communal Public Works Corporation of the City of Prague (Komunální podnik hlavního města Prahy).¹¹⁶

In 1949, František Jech went to work for the Building Enterprise of the Communal Public Works Corporation of the City of Prague.¹¹⁷ With Adolf Benš, he had been the second-prize winner in the 1935 Baťa house competition. He was one of the most active designers of prefabricated buildings in the 1940s and the author of a 1946 book about using industrial building methods to construct low-rise family housing.¹¹⁸ From 1947 to 1949, Jech led an architects' collective that worked on the Solidarita project, a twelve-hundred-unit housing complex in Prague financed by a group of housing cooperatives and national enterprises.¹¹⁹ The design of the Solidarita row house type had already been introduced in Jech's 1946 text, where he argued that low-rise housing should be designed "not only to the minimum needs of its inhabitants, but the optimal average requirements for floor area and space, functionally, hygienically, and technically, with consideration for the predominant type of family."¹²⁰ Another member of the design team, Karel Storch, had traveled to Scandinavia the previous year, and this influence was also clear in the project.¹²¹

Solidarita was notable for its mix of uses, with row houses, apartments, and a small shopping center on the site, as well as its construction method using wood and concrete prefabricated elements for ceilings, walls, and façades (figs. 5.50 and 5.51). This was the first large-scale housing project in Czechoslovakia to use prefabricated elements.¹²² Half of the units were in compact single-family row houses that had a living room, small kitchen, and WC on the first floor and two bedrooms, a bathroom, and a terrace upstairs. They were built in long, elegant rows perpendicular to and sloping away from the major traffic thoroughfare along the northern edge of the site. This arrangement created pedestrian walkways that sloped gently downhill as they passed between the front and backyards of the houses; the yards were maintained as gardens and have since grown into beautiful and lush spaces (fig. 5.52). The architectural style and scale of the buildings, as well as the gardens, closely resembled Scandinavian precedents from the period, including a cooperative housing project in Praestehaven, Denmark, from 1939 to 1941, which was published in the same issue of *Architektura ČSR* as Storch's 1947 article on international housing standards (fig. 5.53).¹²³

Plans for the housing development's apartment buildings included gen-



FIG. 5.52. SOLIDARITA BACKYARD GARDENS, 2006.

FIG. 5.53. COOPERATIVE HOUSING ASSOCIATION PROJECT, PRAESTEHAVER, DENMARK, AS SHOWN IN *ARCHITEKTURA ČSR* (1947).



FIG. 5.54. SOLIDARITA APARTMENT BUILDINGS, PRAGUE, C. 1948.

erously sized two- and three-room apartments typical of the Two-Year Plan. The earliest apartment buildings, a group of six on the west side of the site, were finished in 1949 and constructed with the same prefabricated façade panels as the row houses. The apartments had two balconies inset into the footprint of the building, a shallow one on the entrance side of the building and a deeper balcony on the other side off the main living area (fig. 5.54). Because of the slow pace of construction, the remaining buildings were later built as standardized T-series buildings. Because of this shift, a series of courtyards and community spaces that had been part of the original plan were not constructed.¹²⁴

In 1949, as an employee of the Communal Public Works Corporation, Jech began work on a tall experimental panel building that he hoped the City of Prague would adopt as a standard housing type.¹²⁵ He published articles about the project in *Architektura ČSR* in 1950 and 1951; one was more than thirty pages long, indicating something of the interest in the project among the journal's editorial board.¹²⁶ The building looked like a panelák—each exterior panel was the size of a single room—yet it was designed with poured concrete structural “cross-walls” and light concrete cladding. In explaining the structural system, he remarked on the shortage of steel for residential

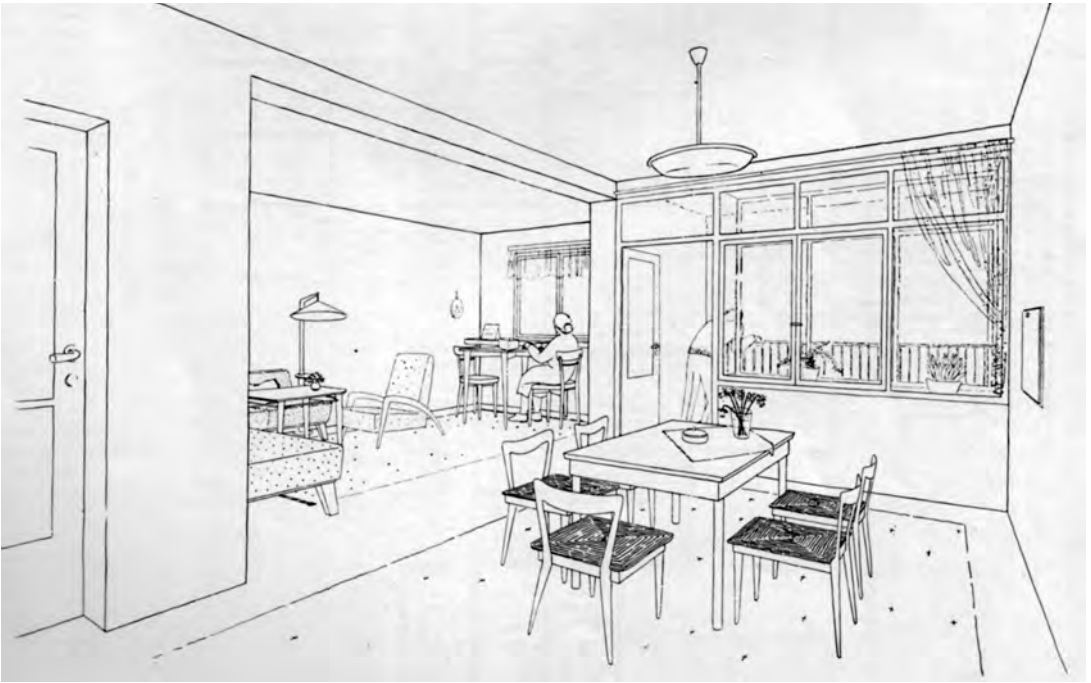


FIG. 5.55. FRANTIŠEK JECH, EXPERIMENTAL HIGH-RISE BUILDING FOR PRAGUE, 1950.

FIG. 5.56. LIVING ROOM IN JECH BUILDING LOOKING NORTHWEST, 1950.

construction. The building could be built six to fourteen stories high and situated individually on a site or in groups of two or three (fig. 5.55).

The benefit of the Jech proposal over later panel technology was the flexibility of the plan. Since only the interior walls were structural, there was much greater freedom to alter the massing and floor plates in these buildings (fig. 5.56). Jech used that to great advantage in proposing multiwing buildings that pinwheeled around a central core, as well as more straightforward bar buildings (fig. 5.57). Although prototypes were built at Solidarita and in

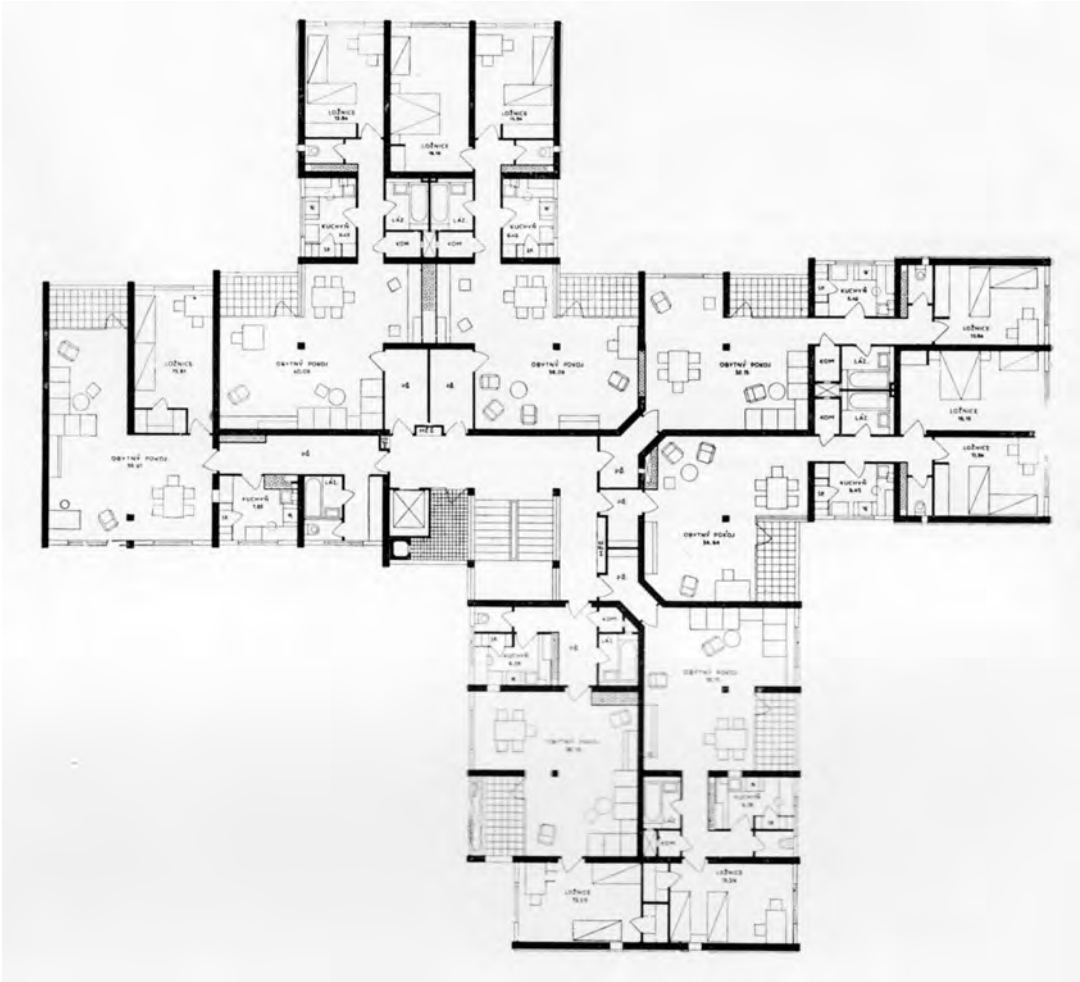


FIG. 5-57. JECH PLAN FOR THE EXPERIMENTAL HIGH-RISE IN PRAGUE.

the Michle neighborhood in Prague, Jech's proposals were not pursued further. One could argue that it was the flexibility itself, the possibility that in each application the building might take on a different shape, that made it an inferior alternative to paneláks, in the opinion of the architectural administration, since the building sector as a whole was moving toward typification rather than modularity. Embedded in the dozens of potential configurations for the building was a sense of the architect as an individual designer, although one who favored an industrial aesthetic over socialist realist deco-

rative schemes. According to the 1953 manual published by Voženílek's institute, the Public Works Corporation in Prague was testing panels for a five- to ten-story prototype of a tall building made with a prefabricated skeleton and panel system.¹²⁷ However, they were having trouble finding a suitable panel. No further evidence remains to suggest that anything ever came of this research, although among the various proposals of the early 1950s, this system was closest to Voženílek's own argument in his 1952 text about the superiority of the nonstructural panel over the structural panel.

The next innovation was a hybrid system with pre-stressed concrete frames embedded in panels. Designed by Vladimír Karfík, the architect of the Baťa skyscraper in Zlín, and a research team from the Institute of Building Materials and Construction in Bratislava, the first prototype was part of a temporary exhibition at the 1952 Architects' Congress in Prague.¹²⁸ According to Karfík's memoir, the building "awakened great interest, because at the time no panel buildings existed in our country." He recalled that he was inspired to return to the problem of the panel building after a meeting in Moscow with Soviet architect A. Michailov, who was pursuing research similar to Karfík's wartime work in Zlín.¹²⁹ Presumably, he was referring to his role as director of the Building Department, overseeing Kula and Adamec in their experimental housing research.

After the congress, Karfík returned to Bratislava and, along with an architect and two engineers from the university, continued developing the technology into what they called the BA system, named for Bratislava.¹³⁰ It was similar to what became known in the Soviet Union as the Michailov system.¹³¹ The technology was notable for its use of pre-stressed concrete frames that were infilled with lightweight, unreinforced concrete to create a single panel. On the interior, the framing system allowed for hollow frames parallel to the exterior façade and some nonstructural partition walls, creating the possibility of larger living spaces within the rigidity of the three-dimensional structural grid.¹³² In 1955, Karfík's team built a permanent prototype near the center of Bratislava (figs. 5.58–5.60). In a light touch that emphasized the continuity between his work in Zlín and the new building in Bratislava, there were figurative relief panels over each doorway of the BA building, just like on Karfík's brick Two-Year Plan buildings in Zlín (fig. 5.61). The project was voted the best housing design of 1955, although the specific construction method was used only in Bratislava.¹³³ In later examples, the structural frames became formal elements, often extending out from the façade to create shallow balconies.¹³⁴ So, although from the exterior the BA system prototype looked identical to early paneláks, the frames later developed into visual counterpoints to the flat gridded surfaces of paneláks (fig. 5.62).¹³⁵

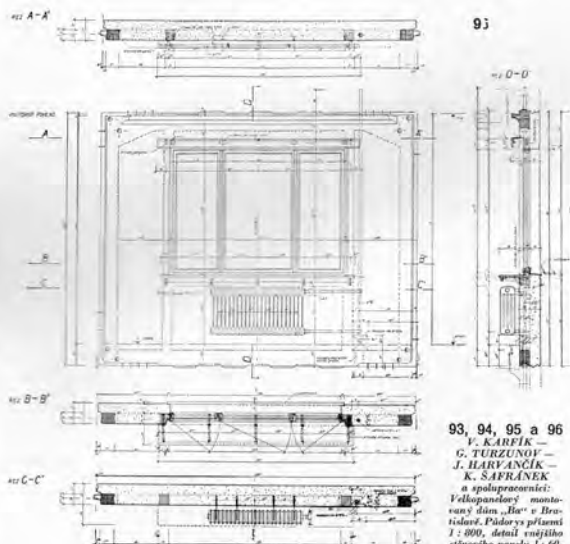
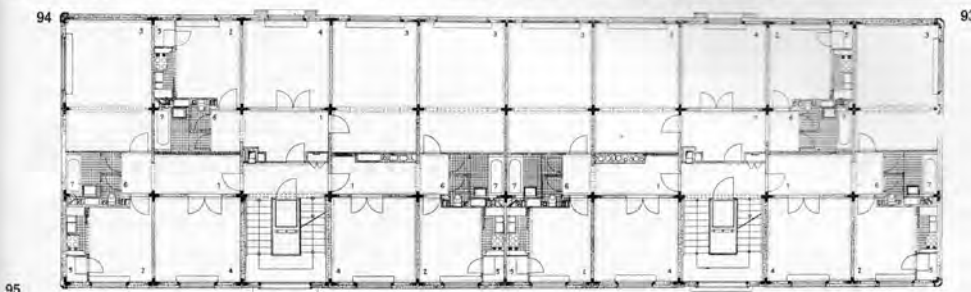
PROF. ING. ARCH. V. KARFÍK — ING.
G. TURZUNOV — DOC. ING. DR. J. HAR-
VANČÍK — ING. K. ŠAFRÁNEK A SPOLU-
PRACOVNÍCI:

PROJEKT VELKOPANELOVÉHO
MONTOVANÉHO DOMU „BA“ VČETNĚ
EXPERIMENTÁLNÍHO PROJEKTU
TECHNOLIE VÝROBY

Projekt a realizace prototypu jsou uplatněním u nás zatím nejprogresivnějšího systému panelové občanské stavby. Jsou zde shrnuty zkušenosti zahraniční (zejména sovětský systém Ing. Michajlova) i naše, uplatněny nové hmoty (kerasit) a výrobní postupy (obráběné ocelolitinové formy, způsob vibrace, úprava povrchu atd.).

Systém vyniká jednoduchostí, přehledností a dobrou skladbou půdorysu při plném využití sáchoenicové osnovy rámečkových panelů. Všechny díly jsou prefabrikované, při čemž pracovní postupy je možno upravit pro průmyslovou velkovýrobu. Průměrná váha konstrukce s keramситovou výplní — 800 kg/1 m³ — je hluboko pod váhou jiných panelových konstrukcí. Pružitel budovy svou jednoduchou tektonikou bez nákladných okras a druhých materiálů splňuje požadavky ekonomie výstavby a nepůsobí při tom šedivě a bezútěšně.

V návrhu se oceňuje zejména možnost vysokého stupně správnosti v masové výstavbě.



93, 94, 95 a 96
V. KARFÍK —
G. TURZUNOV —
J. HARVANČÍK —
K. ŠAFRÁNEK
a spolupracovníci:
Velkopanelový montovaný dům „Ba“ v Bratislavě. Půdorys přízemí 1:800, detail vnitřního stínového panelu 1:60.

FIG. 5.58. V. KARFÍK, G. TURZUNOV, J. HARVANČÍK, K. ŠAFRÁNEK, AND TEAM, BA SYSTEM PROTOTYPE, BRATISLAVA, 1955.



FIG. 5.59. BA SYSTEM PROTOTYPE, BRATISLAVA, C. 1956.

FIG. 5.60. BA CONSTRUCTION SYSTEM.

FIG. 5.61. RELIEF PANEL OVER DOORWAY AT BA SYSTEM PROTOTYPE IN BRATISLAVA, 2003.

FIG. 5.62. LATER BA SYSTEM BUILDING IN BRATISLAVA, C. 1958.

THE INSTITUTE FOR PREFABRICATED BUILDINGS

The most intensive and systematic investigations of housing prototypes were under way at the three work sites of the Institute for Prefabricated Buildings, in Gottwaldov, Prague, and Brno.¹³⁶ Karel Janů later wrote that the activities of this institute defined “a new period of technical progress” in the industrialization of building.¹³⁷ With a “scientific” methodology that was rooted in the first Stavoprojekt administration’s technocratic point of view, the institute decided to test four prefabricated construction technologies and perform

a comparative analysis to determine which one would result in cheaper, faster, and more efficient construction of new housing units. None of the indices measured any aspect of the living environment or its spatial qualities. One reason for this omission was that the initial investigations took the T-series apartment buildings as their starting point. The tests dealt only with construction methods; the resulting buildings were expected to be similar in material, scale, and layout to existing types.¹³⁸ This strategy—testing new methods to achieve the same types—was similar to that which the Baťa Company had used in its first experiments with prefabricated construction in the 1930s and early 1940s.

As presented in the Institute of Architecture and Town Planning's 1953 manual on industrial building and various articles in *Architektura ČSR* the following year, prefabrication had four developmental stages leading toward increased industrialization.¹³⁹ In the manual, a series of drawings illustrated the stages, with the representations of stages two, three, and four reprinted from a 1952 issue of the Soviet equivalent of *Architektura ČSR*, *Architěktura SSSR* (Soviet Architecture) (fig. 5.63).¹⁴⁰ Using the Soviet drawings underscored for readers the fact that Czechoslovakia and the Soviet Union were pursuing a shared goal to perfect these industrialized methods.

The first of the four stages was large block construction, which utilized industrially produced large blocks for the interior and exterior walls, with prefabricated reinforced concrete floor panels and stairways. The second was a hybrid system with the same large-block exterior walls, floor panels, and stairways, but in this case they were combined with a reinforced prefabricated concrete skeleton system, allowing the interior walls to be nonstructural partitions. The third system was completely prefabricated, with a reinforced concrete skeleton, floor panels, and stairways, the exterior being clad with lightweight concrete panels. The fourth system, which the administration coveted most at the time, used structural panels for the

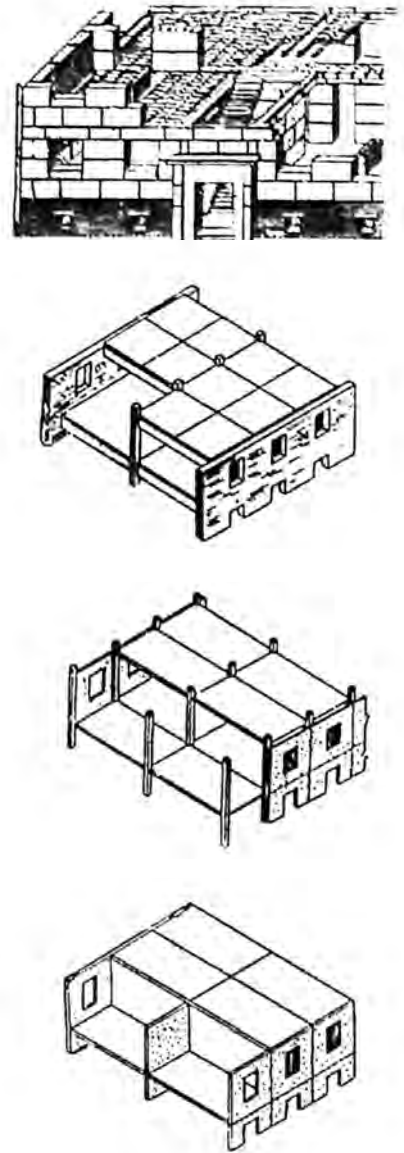


FIG. 5.63. THE FOUR DEVELOPMENTAL STAGES OF CONSTRUCTION LEADING TO GREATER INDUSTRIALIZATION, WITH SYSTEM ONE AT THE TOP FOLLOWED BY TWO, THREE AND FOUR, 1953.



FIGS. 5.64–5.66. LARGE-BLOCK CONSTRUCTION IN PORUBA, C. 1954.

exterior and interior walls and required no skeleton. The images and text in the manual offered a clear narrative about progressing through these systems to reach complete prefabrication. Despite enthusiasm for the system, its inherent problems were already recognized. For example, the manual's authors wrote that "the prefabrication system from large panels without a skeleton, which is economically the most advantageous, has the disadvantage that the interior walls are structural and therefore it is not possible to use this kind of building where open floor plans are needed, or for buildings that are frequently altered."¹⁴¹

Each of the four systems was assigned to a branch of the Institute of Prefabricated Buildings.¹⁴² Brno did additional testing on the large-block system, which was already in use in Brno, Most, Ostrava, and Gottwaldov.¹⁴³ The first two districts of Poruba in Ostrava were built almost entirely with this method (figs. 5.64–5.66). Karel Janů worked for the Prague office of the institute during this period, and, along with Karel Prager, who would later design the first curtain wall building in Czechoslovakia, he tested system two at a site in Otrokovice near Gottwaldov.¹⁴⁴ He based the design for that project on the T16 apartment building from the T-series (fig. 5.67).¹⁴⁵ Another team at the Prague office, led by Miloslav Wimmer, began work on system three, or the Wimmer system. The first prototype was a three-story apartment building with twelve units.¹⁴⁶ The institute named it the "S house." Karel Honzík worked with Wimmer on the prototype, and his sketches for possible façade treatments were published in *Architektura ČSR* in 1954 (fig. 5.68). The designs show the extent to which the panels themselves created some anxiety among architects, who felt that their scale and proportion should be underplayed by adding additional horizontal emphasis, decorative doorway details, and patterning on the surface of the panels.

The Gottwaldov branch of the Institute of Prefabricated Buildings was the site of testing for system four—structural panel technology. Given the long history of this research in Zlín/Gottwaldov, it was logical



FIG. 5.67. T16 APARTMENT BLOCK UNDER CONSTRUCTION IN OTROKOVICE USING THE JANŮ SYSTEM, 1954.

that the most sophisticated prefabrication system would be tested at the former Baťa facility. Bohumil Kula and Hynek Adamec, who had been progressing toward the goal of a structural panel building since the early 1940s, had a model of a G-building as early as 1950, although construction did not begin until 1953 (fig. 5.69).¹⁴⁷ The first panelák type using this system was known as the G40 because it contained forty apartments; another early variation was the L-shaped G55 corner type. Both were five stories high with multiple access stairs—similar in scale, proportion, and materiality to the T-series of the same era. The first panelák prototypes were completed in Gottwaldov in 1954 (fig. 5.70). Identical buildings were constructed in the Pankrác neighborhood of



FIG. 5.68. KAREL HONZÍK, SKETCHES FOR POSSIBLE FAÇADE TREATMENTS OF A WIMMER SYSTEM BUILDING, 1954.

Prague the next year, and another development in Strašnice followed (figs. 5.71 and 5.72).

For technical reasons, the first paneláks incorporated elements such as cornices and pilasters to close corners, hide mortar joints, and cover gaps between the panels. These followed from the ribs, straps, and other elements that Kula and Adamec had used to hold together their earlier experimental buildings. They also had another benefit—surfaces for ornamentation. The first G-buildings, and the BA prototype in Bratislava, had neoclassical details, including dentils along the cornice, capitals on the pilasters, and ornamentation around the entrances. With these small additions, and without shifting their primary focus away from industrialization, designers could adhere to the stylistic expectations of Stavoprojekt, where socialist realism still dominated, and continue their research.

As stylistic preferences changed and production capabilities improved, the façades were stripped of pilasters and cornices. At this point, the grid pattern of the panels became more pronounced. In his 1960 book on panel buildings, Hungarian engineer Gyula Sebestyén described the transition this way:

In the case of buildings Type G40 erected in Gottwaldov, Czechoslovakia, two-story high, narrow, pier-type cladding elements were placed to cover the vertical joints in the external walls. Among the advantages of this solution, apart from covering the joints, are that the effects of any inaccuracies in the elevation are neutralized, any damage to the arrises or corners of the panels is covered up, and the thermal insulation at the corners of the building is improved. On the other hand, it was found that the number of units required is increased considerably, the total weight of the building is greater, and so are the material requirements and the labor content of the construction; in addition, the building became too heavily articulated and loses that simplicity which is at present rightly demanded of large-panel structures. For these reasons external cladding elements of this type are no longer used.¹⁴⁸

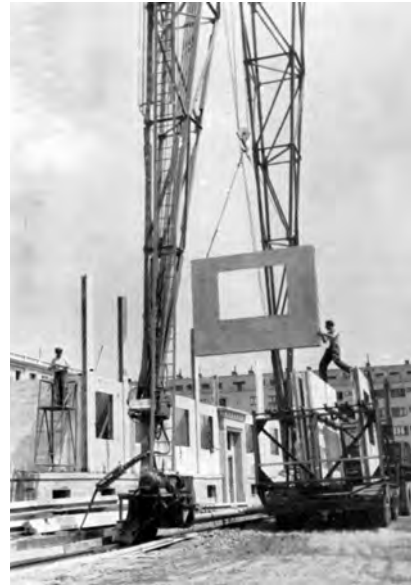


FIG. 5.69. BOHUMIL KULA AND HYNEK ADAMEC, MODEL OF G-BUILDING PROTOTYPE, 1950.

FIG. 5.70. G55 BUILDING IN GOTTWALDOV, 1954.

FIGS. 5.71–5.72. G40 BUILDINGS UNDER CONSTRUCTION IN PRAGUE, C. 1956.

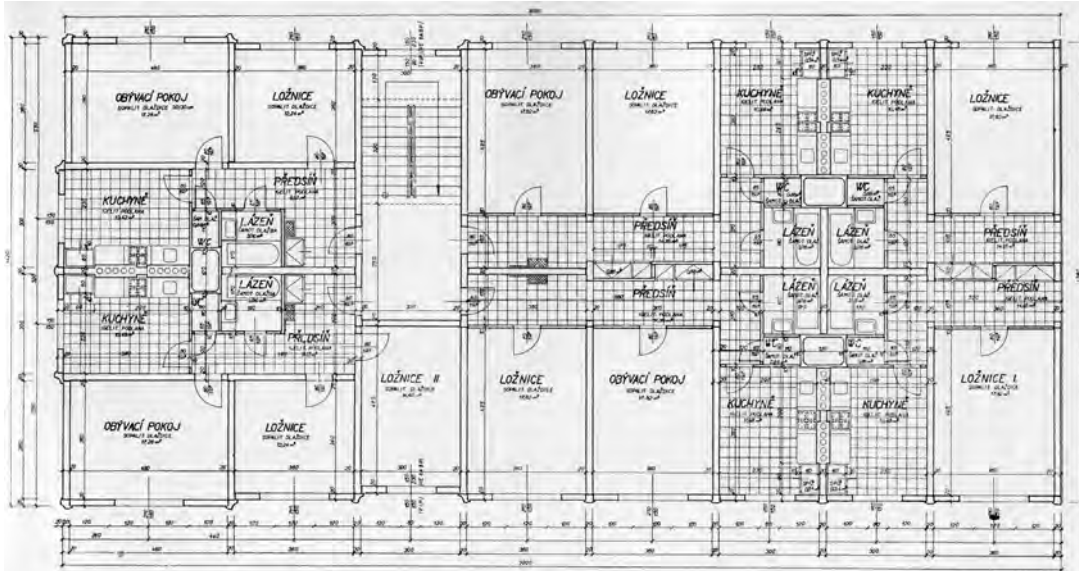


FIG. 5.73. BOHUMIL KULA AND HYNEK ADAMEC, PLAN OF G40 BUILDING, ZLÍN, 1954.

The “simplicity” of these panels was later seen as crude and unappealing. The cornice and pilaster elements had given the building façades some scale and relationship to the older buildings around them; this connection was lost in the transition to the scaleless geometry of the gridded façade.

On the interior, the two- and three-room units of the G40 and G55 corner type were similar in size and layout to the Two-Year Plan apartments and the T-series (fig. 5.73). In this first generation of G-buildings, the apartments had multiple configurations and circulation patterns, although all consisted of a series of small rooms because of the limitations of the structural wall panels. Doors were placed parallel to the exterior façade, except for those around the staircase, and four individual room-sized panels defined each room, making them feel like separate compartments without the natural flow of spaces in older apartments. Standardized furnishings, including couches that doubled as beds, were designed in one of the research institutes for use in the T-series and the G-buildings (fig. 5.74). Because of the varied layouts and lack of a standardized core for the kitchen and bathroom, the first paneláks required a large number of individual panels—103 different sizes in the G40.¹⁴⁹

In the G57 type, the second generation of the G-buildings, Karel Janů’s concept of the “living core” was employed for the first time in a building intended for mass production (fig. 5.75).¹⁵⁰ Simplified from the G40 and G55

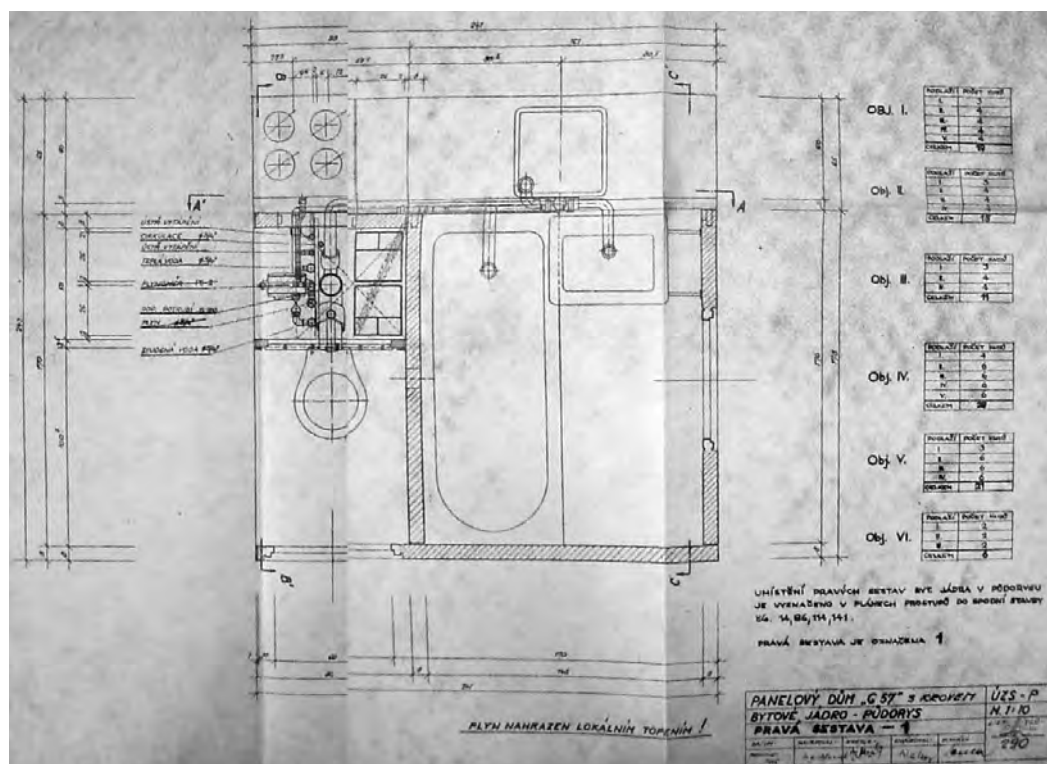


FIG. 5.74. STANDARDIZED FURNITURE FOR THE T-SERIES AND G-BUILDINGS, 1953.

FIG. 5.75. LIVING CORE FOR THE G57 UNIT, 1956.

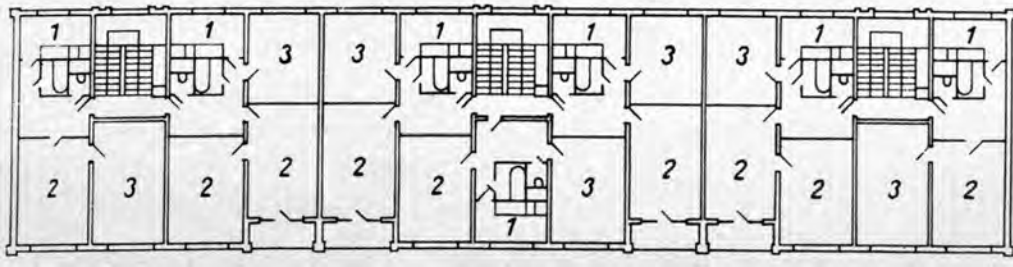


FIG. 5.76. G57 BUILDING PLAN, 1956.

layouts, the G57 plan used a two-bay structural system that placed the living core, with a windowless bathroom, separate WC, and integrated kitchen, in the center of one of the bays (fig. 5.76).¹⁵¹ The kitchen occupied the space between the bathroom/WC unit and the exterior windows. The streamlined floor plans reduced the need for so many different panels, and the building now had “universal orientation of the front” side, which meant that the building could be placed facing any direction on a site (fig. 5.77). Nonstructural partitions were also introduced as spatial dividers. Later types such as the G58 and G59 used lighter concrete panels, made of cement mixed with plastics and industrial waste materials such as slag, as well as individual steel columns on the interior to create more flexibility in plan.¹⁵² There was also experimentation with the exterior expression of the buildings, including circular window patterns and multicolored façade panels (fig. 5.78).¹⁵³ In this case, however, the design for the stairwell with circular windows had a serious problem. Because the pattern repeated on the other side of the building, some of the interior spaces of the apartments were behind the circular windows, something that Karel Storch called an “unfavorable” feature.¹⁵⁴

The real innovation in the panelák designed by Kula and Adamec was the solution they found for the joints. Working from their experience with the ribbed and bolted panels, they devised an ingenious stabilization system.¹⁵⁵ The reinforced concrete panels were cast with two upside-down, V-shaped hangers embedded in them, not at the corners where the joints would be weak but within the interior of the panels, with the joint of the V hitting the top edge of the panel. It was designed to be cut away at that point to reveal a small hook at the base of the V (figs. 5.79 and 5.80). The hooks of the intersecting panels were then fastened together with welded metal staples (fig. 5.81). Cement mortar was poured into the space of the joint, and then it was sealed with a PVC gasket. Since the joints were situated away from the corners, the weight of the panels rested on the panel below and the hook and staples added lateral sta-

VNITŘNÍ NOSNÉ PANELE									
Typ panelu	Prostřední rozměr	Prostřední výška	Rozměry v mm				Výška v mm		
			1	2	3	4	1	2	3
101		101	2100	2100	2100	2100	2100	2100	2100
102		102	2100	2100	2100	2100	2100	2100	2100
103		103	2100	2100	2100	2100	2100	2100	2100
104		104	2100	2100	2100	2100	2100	2100	2100
105		105	2100	2100	2100	2100	2100	2100	2100
106		106	2100	2100	2100	2100	2100	2100	2100
107		107	2100	2100	2100	2100	2100	2100	2100
108		108	2100	2100	2100	2100	2100	2100	2100
111		111	2100	2100	2100	2100	2100	2100	2100
112		112	2100	2100	2100	2100	2100	2100	2100
113		113	2100	2100	2100	2100	2100	2100	2100
144		144	2100	2100	2100	2100	2100	2100	2100
145		145	2100	2100	2100	2100	2100	2100	2100
127		127	2100	2100	2100	2100	2100	2100	2100
128		128	2100	2100	2100	2100	2100	2100	2100



FIG. 5.77. CHART SHOWING PANEL SIZES, 1956.

FIG. 5.78. G58 BUILDING IN GOTTWALDOV SHOWING VARIED EXTERIOR TREATMENT, C. 1958.

bility. The floor panels were also welded together to create a monolithic slab for structural integrity. Like the original bolted panels, there was also a special corner piece that acted as an anchor for the exposed end joint (fig. 5.82). The corner joints were also sealed with mortar and gaskets, which gave the façades of the early panel buildings their distinctive grid pattern.

In his 1961 book, *New Techniques and Architecture in Czechoslovakia*, Karel Storch described the construction technology of the G57:

The structure of the panel system is formed by four basic elements: inner load-bearing wall-panels, outer panels, partitions, and floor-panels. The load-bearing elements assembly forms a rigid system both in the longitudinal and in the transversal direction. The rigidity and tightness of the element node points is ensured by welding the connecting lugs and by cement mortar grout made from slag-pumice sand and cement with a water-sealing admixture. Also the floor-panels laid parallelly with the front are electrically welded in the joints and grouted with cement malt, forming a monolithic slab, enhancing the spatial rigidity of the structure.... The reinforcement consists of two welded wire nettings, and is fitted with connecting and suspension loops.¹⁵⁶

The structural panels were manufactured with three layers—an exterior finish, the center of the panel with structure and insulation, and a thin interior finish. The exterior walls were 24 centimeters (9.5 inches) thick; the interior structural walls, which carried most of the vertical load, were 20 centimeters (8 inches); the nonstructural partitions, 8 to 10 centimeters (3 to 4 inches); and the floor panels 10 to 12 centimeters (4 to 4.75 inches). In each new structural panel building type, architects tried to make the panels thinner and therefore lighter, cheaper, and easier to work with. The buildings were designed with central heating and embedded radiant heating elements in the floor panels.¹⁵⁷ Because of the thickness of the panels, these early paneláks seemed like traditionally constructed buildings with similar finishes, reinforced concrete walls, and good soundproofing. Over time, as panels became thinner and made of flimsier materials, paneláks were known for being noisy, drafty, and poorly constructed.

Once the Institute of Prefabricated Buildings began its analysis, the differences between structural and nonstructural panel technologies became more clear. It was obvious from the start that systems three and four would offer the most benefits, but the differences between the two were still being investigated. According to the 1953 statistics comparing the S type (i.e., Wimmer system or system three) to the G-building (system four), a housing block with a skeleton required 55 percent more reinforcing steel than one without. Although a building without a skeleton required 50 percent more cement, that material was more abundant and less expensive. Steel was not only more expensive but also had other, more lucrative uses, particularly for military

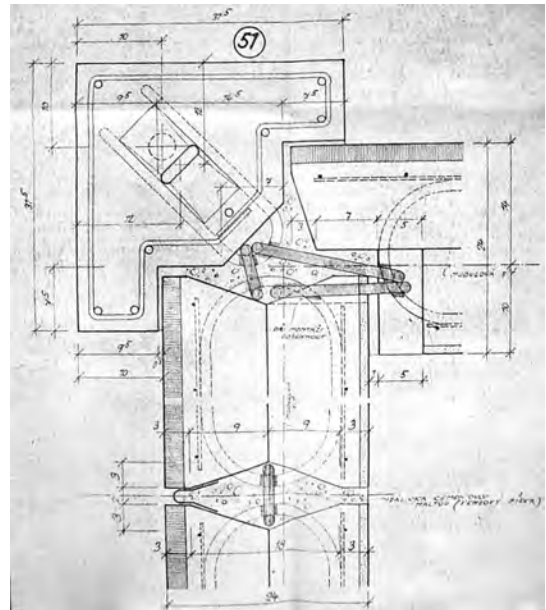
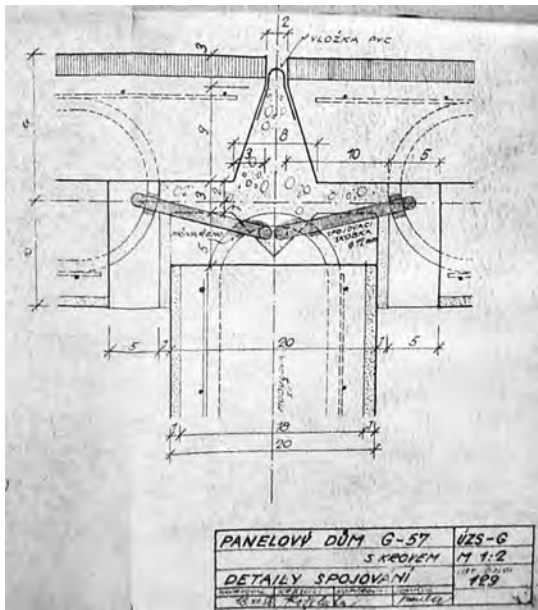
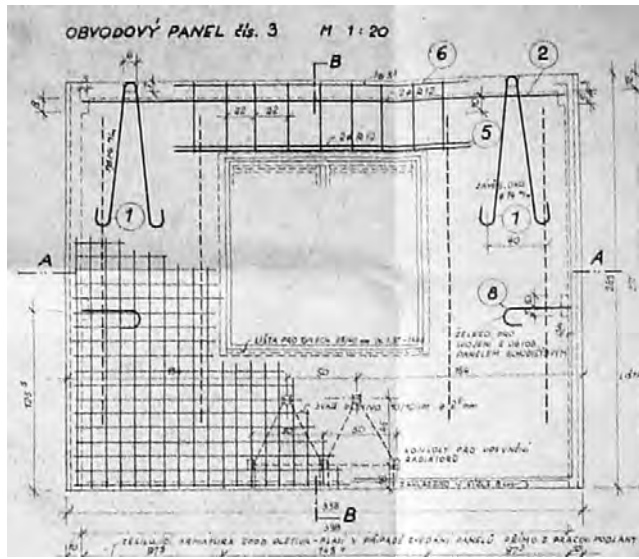
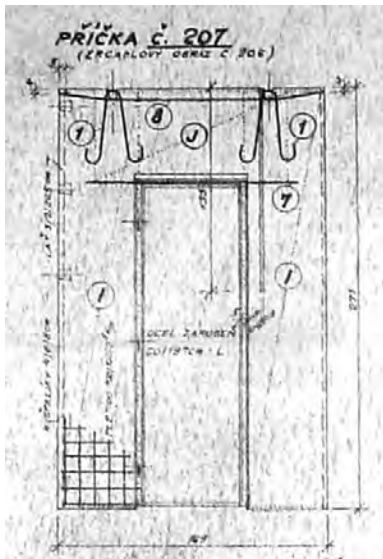


FIG. 5.79. G57 INTERIOR DOOR PANEL, 1956.

FIG. 5.80. G57 EXTERIOR PANEL, 1956.

FIG. 5.81. G57 HOOK AND STAPLE SYSTEM, 1956.

FIG. 5.82. G57 CORNER JOINT WITH HOOK AND STAPLES, 1956.

equipment, which made steel a less desirable material for housing construction. Another important statistic was that 15 percent more labor was required to construct a building with a skeleton—5.7 months of work versus 4.9. In economies facing shortages of skilled laborers and steel, the advantages of the structural panel building were clear.

Yet there was a problem with the new technology. In 1953, a G-building cost more overall than the other systems, despite the material and labor savings. The equipment and cost of production were much higher than less industrialized technologies.¹⁵⁸ For this reason, the panelák was not immediately adopted on a nationwide scale and projects employing all four construction systems continued to be built during the next five years. Research into strategies for cost reduction started immediately, however, since the decision to make the panelák the residential building type of the future had already been made.

THE CENTRAL ADMINISTRATION FOR HOUSING AND CIVIC BUILDING

The embrace of prefabrication occurred simultaneously with other changes in the organization of architectural practice. The first major restructuring of day-to-day activities in the state-run architecture offices occurred in January 1954, when a new central administration for Stavoprojekt was established at the Ministry of Local Enterprise. At this time, the original system of local ateliers within Stavoprojekt, a holdover from the interwar period with its architectural tradition of apprenticeship, was replaced by a regional system of fifteen state design institutes (*státní projektové ústavy*), increased to twenty in 1956. As the producers of documents for standardized and typified buildings, the new design institutes borrowed their working philosophy from industry more than the traditional culture of the design studio.¹⁵⁹ This transition coincided with the end of Sorela and a reconsideration of the direction of architectural developments in the wake of the deaths of Stalin and Gottwald. Although Khrushchev would not make his pronouncements against Stalinist architecture until later that year, the organization of architectural practice in Czechoslovakia was already beginning to change by early 1954, as the state design institutes attempted to recapture some of the technological enthusiasm of the first years of socialist architecture.

From an economic planning perspective, this period was also a time of transition as the First Five-Year Plan ended and two stopgap one-year plans were put in place in January 1954 and 1955. According to economist Alice Teichova, various problems, including the hurried “process of [agricultural] collectivization, the falling standard of living, and the severe currency reform at the end of the First Five-Year Plan [in 1953,] led to increasing political tensions and, consequently, there was a temporary break in the strict pursuit of

the planned targets.”¹⁶⁰ The one-year plans, which were given the label “New Course,” lowered industrial targets and reduced investment funds for industry while directing more resources to the production of consumer goods.¹⁶¹

For architects, the loss of the stability of the Czechoslovak Building Works and a decrease in construction investment affected housing production; the number of new units completed in 1954 was the lowest since 1951.¹⁶² Since typical projects in this period took three years to complete, these numbers reflected problems that started in 1951. With more investment and production improvements gained through consolidation, the pages of *Architektura ČSR* were full of new housing projects by 1956, although they were mainly examples of T-series buildings adjusted for local site conditions. After two years without long-term planning, the Second Five-Year Plan was finally implemented in January 1956. It returned the economy to its earlier focus on investment in heavy industry and attempted to remedy inefficiencies in the previous plan by reducing paperwork, consolidating administrative tasks, and giving specialists more power to make decisions in their sectors.¹⁶³

It would take another institutional shift to fully embed the logic of the panelák in the building culture of Czechoslovakia. The pivotal moment occurred in January 1956, when the state established a single administration that merged design, investment, and construction into a centralized body, the Central Administration for Housing and Civic Building (Ústřední správa pro bytovou a občanskou výstavbu, henceforth the Central Administration). The new administration was charged with overseeing all construction of housing developments and their related civic buildings, including hospitals, schools, and recreational facilities. This substantial change was made to coincide with the start of the Second Five-Year Plan, since the housing sector had continued to lag behind its plan numbers throughout the first half of the decade.

The Central Administration, led by Vladimír Červenka, was a subordinate organization to the new State Committee for Construction (Státní výbor pro výstavbu), also created in the months leading up to the Second Five-Year Plan. This committee was led by Minister-President Oldřich Beran, the former minister of state controls, with the guidance of Jiří Voženílek as deputy director. At the same time, Karel Janů became deputy director of the new Ministry of Building (Ministerstvo stavebnictví), which dealt more with the production side of the building industry in this new configuration. Both appointments signaled the return of a technocratic approach to housing and architectural practice that reemerged after Khrushchev’s 1954 pronouncements. It also indicated the extent to which socialist realism had been a momentary change of direction for the administration.

In his speech at the inception of the Central Administration, Beran described it as “the objective organ of the state in economic, technical, and

artistic questions of invested building and [one] which has as its work the complex solution of all questions related to investment and the technological development of building.”¹⁶⁴ This was an institutional formation that itself encouraged the centralization and streamlining of standardized housing production, both in block construction and the early structural panel buildings. For example, one of the Central Administration’s earliest goals was coordinating the production of building materials at factories dispersed at intervals across the country to ensure that materials could reach their destinations quickly and inexpensively.¹⁶⁵ When possible, local building materials were incorporated into designs to further reduce costs, since transportation of materials was one of the largest expenses related to construction.

From an economic standpoint, the primary function of the Central Administration was to ensure that the plan numbers were fulfilled no matter what the effect on design standards might be. Each regional office had to submit monthly reports explaining the cause for any fulfillment problems. Common justifications were a lack of laborers, supply delays, or production problems with the prefabricated pieces. The capacity of Stavoprojekt was also utilized across the country rather than only in individual regions. For example, architects from Brno, Olomouc, České Budějovice, and Prague were assigned to assist the office in Ostrava with designs for Poruba and other satellite cities such as Havířov and Karviná. Therefore, what had started in 1948 as a collection of independent architectural offices with relative autonomy had been transformed by 1956 into a consolidated national network with a system of accountability and a structured, centralized hierarchy.

At each biweekly executive council meeting, the top administrators in the Central Administration would share detailed statistics about the progress of building projects in each of the twenty design institutes. Data on the size, cost, and schedule of each project were collected and analyzed at regular intervals, often quarterly and yearly.¹⁶⁶ Meetings were focused on improving fulfillment numbers, decreasing unit size (and therefore the cost of apartments), and implementing new building technologies such as structural panels and lightweight concrete. Aesthetic concerns were never addressed, and only rarely did functional questions about how these changes affected the inhabitants of the apartments enter into the discussion.

With the centralization of the management structure, regulatory departments, and data collection into a single administration, sharing information about new technologies and building materials among state agencies and with similar organizations abroad became much simpler. As Khrushchev’s reforms began to take hold in 1955, architects were eager to learn more about international developments inside and outside the Eastern Bloc. Study trips and trade fair visits to countries such as the Soviet Union, East Germany,

Switzerland, Sweden, and France were approved for trustworthy architects to both learn about new technologies and to advertise the successes of Czechoslovakia. On average, about twelve employees were permitted to travel per quarter, with the exception of some larger delegations sent to socialist countries on study trips; these often included more than thirty participants.¹⁶⁷

In a report from early 1956, Chairman Červenka argued that in many countries relevant research was being conducted on speeding up the process of design and construction, increasing the number of units being built, and lowering the total cost of projects. With respect to sharing this knowledge, he wrote, "Preparing data about typification is still a ground-breaking pursuit that is not good to learn on one's own from foreign literature, because it just does not exist to the necessary extent. Specialists in other countries from the camp of peace occupy themselves in this way with the same ground-breaking pursuit. In the meantime, as far as we know, this preparation is not being carried out in capitalist countries to the same extent and depth with respect to their economic conditions, as it is in our case."¹⁶⁸ In addition to Červenka's commentary, this report contains six addenda from the Central Administration requesting that Czechoslovak specialists be sent to East Germany and the Soviet Union over the next two years to share information about each country's progress in these areas. A total of twenty-five delegates would travel for periods ranging from one week to six months.¹⁶⁹ Their mandate included inspecting urban planning schemes, exploring new lightweight concrete mixes, discussing transportation and infrastructure strategies, and, most importantly, "establishing" in the Soviet Union and "continuing" in East Germany "a direct scientific-technical cooperation in the preparation of new data about typification in apartment and civic building."¹⁷⁰

The projects that resulted from this era of the Central Administration defined a model that would be carried forward until the end of communism. With the consolidated strength of the Stavoprojekt offices and the regime's ability to clear large tracts of land through slum clearance, the scale of the projects of the late 1950s was oriented to the neighborhood rather than the district. Few projects were at the scale of entire new cities like the original proposals for Nová Ostrava or Nová Dubnica. Instead, most projects were designed to complement historic city centers with new self-contained neighborhoods offering local services and good transportation connections to nearby commercial districts and industries.¹⁷¹ Buildings were often a combination of low-rise masonry block constructions and paneláks, punctuated with high-rise towers to give each neighborhood a discernible silhouette. Urban design, landscape architecture, and transportation planning were all valued as part of the process, although financial problems often hindered what was actually constructed.

The Central Administration functioned independently for only two and a half years, until it was absorbed into the State Committee for Construction in April 1958. Its demise was the result of an increasing mistrust in centralized organizations. When investment was returned again to the regional committees in March 1958, the dissolution of the Central Administration was ordered within a week. Its legacy remained, however, in the patterns of distribution and hierarchical decision-making strategies that had defined its tenure. In the end, architects' concerns for aesthetics had no traction against the budgetary and material constraints imposed by the planned economy. The successive organizational realignments of the former Stavoprojekt continued into the 1980s, and technological determinism continued to dominate the discussion until the early 1990s.

THE PANELÁK AFTER 1956

G-buildings' popularity as a building type accelerated in the late 1950s and 1960s, and they proliferated rapidly. Infrastructure had to be built, including a network of panel factories, to balance the cost of production and transportation. The first three "semi-mechanized" panel factories had been built in Malenovice, Toušen, and Ostrava-Šalamouna in 1953, 1956, and 1957, respectively, with a total capacity of 1,750 apartment units per year. From 1957 to 1959, another seven "fully mechanized" factories were built in cities such as Karviná, Most, and Žilina, bringing the combined overall capacity in the ten factories to 7,450 apartment units per year. This increased production capacity, however, had not yet translated into massive production—only 5,598 units in G-buildings had been constructed across the country by June 1959.¹⁷² But as the capacity grew, so did production. For 1960, plans called for G-buildings to account for 17 percent of all new apartment units, while apartment blocks using a panel system with a prefabricated skeleton accounted for 53 percent of the total.¹⁷³

Over time, the pragmatic benefits of the panelák became apparent. The technology shortened construction time and reduced costs. In a 1966–1967 study, Slovak architect Peter Lizon concluded that a five- to six-story masonry building took fourteen to sixteen months to complete, while an eight-story panelák took only eight to ten months.¹⁷⁴ The Janů system of large block and skeleton construction developed into a series of types called the To1–To8 blocks, but the potential of these buildings was undermined in the 1960s by the enormous political power of the panel production industry itself, which, according to Rostislav Švácha, lobbied to keep other technologies out of the construction sector.¹⁷⁵ During this time, housing developments also grew in scale as the low-rise compact designs of the 1950s gave way to the immense sprawling developments of the 1960s, such as Jižní Město (South City), a Prague district with 100,000 inhabitants. It was built entirely of paneláks to a single master plan.¹⁷⁶



FIG. 5.83. PANELÁK IN PETRŽALKÁ, BRATISLAVA, 2003.

In the 1970s, the panelák, which had started off as a largely urban type in the Czech lands, made its way into the rest of the country as the post-1968 regime attempted to placate its citizens with hundreds of thousands of new apartments during the period of “normalization.”¹⁷⁷ By this time, architects were forced to use lower-quality materials, including plastics, and to design smaller apartments in larger buildings. For example, in the massive Petržalka project in Bratislava, the construction of which started in 1974, the average apartment contains 3.12 rooms in 45 square meters (484 square feet) (fig. 5.83). This self-contained district of sprawling eight- to ten-story panel buildings with a total of 50,000 apartments was erected on the only piece of Czechoslovak land on the Austrian side of the Danube, leaving it accessible to the city and the rest of the country only by bridge. Its architecture and location make it a prime example of how this style of urban planning failed to respond to existing urban patterns and infrastructures.¹⁷⁸

Like Jižní Město and Petržalka, the 1960s and 1970s developments were typically at a massive urban scale—without trees, a pedestrian landscape, or usable community spaces—and nothing like the older districts nearby. Today these groups of often shabby apartment blocks dominate the edges of Czech and Slovak cities and towns. More than 3 million people, or one-third of the

population of the Czech Republic, still live in more than 1.1 million apartment units in 80,000 structural panel buildings.¹⁷⁹ More than one-quarter of Bratislava's 435,000 people live in Petržalka alone.¹⁸⁰ In the years since the end of communism, for residents and visitors alike, these drab buildings have come to represent everything that was wrong with communism. President Václav Havel famously referred to them as “undignified rabbit hutches (*králikárny*).”¹⁸¹ For Czechs and Slovaks, who are proud of their intact medieval cities and cathedrals, picturesque country towns, and a celebrated history of interwar modernism, it remains difficult to understand how paneláks could have become so ubiquitous less than forty years after the apex of the avant-garde. This investigation of the origins and development of the panelák, and the particular cultural, economic, social, and political conditions in which it was conceived, provides some explanation as to the dominance of this building type in postwar Czechoslovakia. The true test of the logic and successes of the Communist government's early housing programs will be whether or not paneláks can be fully integrated into the ever evolving present and future landscapes of Czech and Slovak cities.

EPILOGUE

[We] found the architects and planners of Czechoslovakia very sure of what they were doing. They were convinced that their vast [apartment]-building program was the best and most urgent thing for them. Preston Benson, 1961

By May 1961, when a twenty-two-member delegation from Britain arrived in Czechoslovakia to view the country's achievements in architecture and urban planning, it had been more than fifteen years since the establishment of the Block of Progressive Architectural Associations (BAPS) and the creation of a broad coalition of architects who saw their future in collective work.¹ There had been surprises and disappointments that few had anticipated. The personal and professional difficulties faced by many should also not be forgotten. Yet in the terms set out in 1945 by the initial leaders of BAPS, the building industry in 1961 looked remarkably like what they had first proposed. Czech and Slovak architects found industrialization, typification, and standardization to be the best methods for achieving the goals set out for them by the architectural administration and the political elite. Many also found personal satisfaction in providing housing for a population that had long suffered housing shortages. Their objectives—to build as many housing units as quickly and economically as possible, to make buildings that celebrated the national heritage, to change an architect's role from that of artist to technician—were logical and even admirable in the terms of postwar Europe, where all countries, capitalist and communist alike, faced war damage, housing and labor shortages, uncertain political alliances, and the threat of corporate and cultural imperialism, whether American or Soviet.

From the perspective of architectural history, the transition chronicled here, from an artistic model of professional practice to one reliant on technology and industrial production, is a critical aspect of the history of modernity that needs more scholarly attention. Architectural historians have long espoused the belief that once architects lose a direct connection to art, and all of the accolades and creative power that go with it, the results can be written off as mere “building” instead of architecture with a capital A. Not only has building, in this sense, been less important to the discipline, but it is also perceived to require little analysis or exploration, since economic and technological determinism are its primary characteristics.

The unique building—the ultimate manifestation of the artistic will of the architect—will likely remain the most alluring topic for architectural historians, although fewer are built every year. As this study shows, architecture is much more driven by manufacturing processes, production capacities, and the limitations of materials than most of architectural history allows. This was true not only after World War II in the Eastern Bloc but for the whole of architectural history since the Industrial Revolution and maybe even before. The assumption that these processes are self-evident and fixed ignores the many ways in which ideas about what constitutes architecture are themselves produced by their cultural and temporal context. The serial building, the building type, design as research, and the mechanical application of ornament are all crucial topics for an expanded history of architecture. In fact, the relevance of the discipline in the twenty-first century will be determined by its ability to see the field in these broader terms.

In the past twenty years, architects and designers have understood and embraced this change much more readily. Technologies that far surpass the capabilities of the human hand, such as digital fabrication and building information modeling (BIM), have revolutionized design practice. Rather than being scared by the loss of individual artistic control that these technologies represent, some firms have adopted a new model of practice based on interdisciplinary and research-oriented collaboration between architects, landscape architects, planners, and engineers. Although particular personalities may be the public faces of such practices—Rem Koolhaas, Frank Gehry, Daniel Libeskind, Zaha Hadid, Jacques Herzog, and Pierre de Meuron may come to mind—these offices are in fact massive global operations spanning continents and employing hundreds of people. It is a situation much like what was represented by the label “and team” associated with many Stavoprojekt designs. In positioning the architect as one actor in a complex network of people working toward the construction of a building, a series of buildings, or even a city, this book provides one of the first historical perspectives on a transformation that is occurring around the world at this moment.

The fact that this reorientation, from unique buildings to serial and industrialized production, emerged for the first time on a massive scale in the Eastern Bloc in the 1940s and 1950s may not be surprising for those specialists familiar with the mechanisms of the planned economy and the history of the region in this period, although until now such conclusions were only speculation. The intertwining of architecture and politics is a fundamental characteristic of the production of the built environment everywhere. In the case of postwar Czechoslovakia, these interactions were much more systematic, forceful, and precarious given the “totality” of the state sphere. On the other hand, this is still a history of architectural practice, and although the politics are set in high relief, there is much to learn in the text about the fate of the modern project after 1938 and the longer history of modern form-making in the twentieth century.

This book may also serve as a warning to the profession about the pitfalls of ceding too much intellectual ground to the mechanisms of building production. Industrialization should be about efficient, cost-effective, and sustainable building practices, not about generating form through data-driven processes. The essential function of architecture is designing spaces for human interaction and experience. Once these qualities are lost, whether in a poorly constructed 1980s panelák or a perfectly executed, digitally fabricated building in 2011, the results are the same: a space that people do not want to linger in and, therefore, a failure of architectural imagination.

NOTES

All Czech to English translations are by the author unless noted.

INTRODUCTION

Epigraph: Eric Dluhosch, translator's introduction to Karel Teige, *The Minimum Dwelling*, trans. Eric Dluhosch (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2002), xxiv–xxv.

1. The colloquial term *panelák* has significant cultural meaning in the former Czechoslovakia for Czechs, Slovaks, and English speakers who study the region. The English equivalent, structural panel building, is clunky and less resonant. For this reason, the Czechoslovak version of the building type is referred to throughout the book as a panelák. The proper plural in Czech is *paneláky*.

2. Visitors included J. J. P. Oud, Walter Gropius, and Le Corbusier. Kenneth Frampton, "A Modernity Worthy of the Name: Notes on the Czech Architectural Avant-Garde," in *El arte de la vanguardia en Checoslovaquia 1918–1938 / The Art of the Avant-Garde in Czechoslovakia, 1918–1938*, ed. Jaroslav Anděl (Valencia: Institut Valencia d'Art Modern, 1993), 215–16. For more on the avant-garde networks in Central Europe, see Timothy O. Benson and Éva Forgács, *Between Worlds: A Sourcebook of Central European Avant-Gardes, 1910–1930* (Los Angeles: Los Angeles County Museum of Art; Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2002).

3. See Eric Dluhosch and Rostislav Šváchá, eds., *Karel Teige, 1900–1951: L'Enfant Terrible of the Czech Modernist Avant-Garde* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1999); Rostislav Šváchá, *Devětsil: Czech Avant-Garde of the 1920s and 30s* (Oxford: Museum of Modern Art; London: Design Museum, 1990).

4. See, for example, Jean-Louis Cohen, "Zlín: An Industrial Republic," *Rassegna* 19, no. 70 (1997): 42–45; Pavel Novák and Josef Ruszelák, *Zlínská architektura: 1900–1950* [Zlín Architecture] (Zlín: Čas, 1993); Vladimír Šlapeta, "Bata Architecture," *Rassegna* 12, no. 43/3 (1990): 70–79; and Vladimír Šlapeta, *Bata: architektura a urbanismus, 1910–1950* [Bata: Architecture and Urbanism] (Zlín: Statní galerie ve Zlíně, 1991).

5. See Kenneth Frampton, *Modern Architecture: A Critical History*, 2nd ed. (London: Thames and Hudson, 1985), 251; Jaroslav Anděl, *The New Vision for the New Architecture:*

Czechoslovakia, 1918–1938 (Prague: Slovart, 2005); Dluhosch and Švácha, eds., *Karel Teige, 1900–1951*; and Frampton, “Modernity Worthy of the Name.”

6. Especially valuable examples include Matúš Dulla and Henrieta Moravčíková, *20th-Century Architecture in Slovakia* (Stuttgart: Art Stock, 2003); Zdeněk Kudělka and Jindřich Chatrný, eds., *For New Brno: Brno's Architecture, 1919–1939* (Brno: Muzeum města Brna, 2000), and the simultaneously released Zdeněk Kudělka and Jindřich Chatrný, eds., *O nové Brno: brněnská architektura, 1919–1939* (Brno: Muzeum města Brna, 2000); Rostislav Švácha, Sona Ryndová, and Pavla Pokorná, eds., *Forma sleduje vědu / Form Follows Science* (Prague: Jaroslav Fragner Gallery, 2000); Karel Teige, *Modern Architecture in Czechoslovakia and Other Writings*, trans. Irena Žantovská Murray and David Britt (Los Angeles: Getty Research Institute, 2000); Jindřich Vyběral, *Zrození velkoměsta: architektura v obraze Moravské Ostravy 1890–1938* [The Birth of a Great City: Architecture in Pictures of Moravian Ostrava, 1890–1938], 3rd ed. (Šlapanice: ERA; Ostrava: Národní památkový ústav, územní odborné pracoviště v Ostravě, 2003).

7. The many catalogues of this nature tend to place more emphasis on the descriptions of objects and buildings and less on analytical or theoretical frameworks in which to discuss them. Such works include Anděl, ed., *El arte de la vanguardia en Checoslovaquia / Art of the Avant-Garde in Czechoslovakia*; Kudělka and Chatrný, *O nové Brno* (also the English-language edition, *For New Brno*) F. L. Gahura, L. Hornáková, and J. Gahura, *Frantisek Lýdie Gahura, 1891–1958: projekty, realizace a socharské dílo* [Frantisek Lýdie Gahura, 1891–1958: Projects, Buildings, and Sculptures] (Zlín: Krajská galerie výtvarného umění; Brno: Muzeum města Brna, 2006); Monika Platzer and Klaus Spechtenhauser, eds., *Jiří Kroha: Kubist, Expressionist, Funktionalist, Realist* (Vienna: Architektur Zentrum Wien and Vertrieb Sonderzahl Verlagsges, 1998); Šlapeta, *Baba*; Vladimír Šlapeta and Daniela Karasová, eds., *Jan Kotěra, 1871–1923: The Founder of Modern Czech Architecture* (Prague: Municipal House and Kant, 2001); Švácha, *Devětsil*; Rostislav Švácha, *Jaromír Krejcar, 1895–1949* (Prague: Jaroslav Fragner Gallery, 1995); Stephan Templ, *Baba: The Werkbund Housing Estate Prague* (Basel: Birkhäuser, 1999); Alexander von Vegesack, ed., *Czech Cubism: Architecture, Furniture, and Decorative Arts, 1910–1925* (New York: Princeton Architectural Press; Weil am Rhein: Vitra Design Museum, 1992).

8. Teige, *Minimum Dwelling*, xxvi.

9. Frampton, “Modernity Worthy of the Name,” 213.

10. *Ibid.*, 231.

11. See, for example, Radomír Luža and Victor S. Mamatey, eds., *A History of the Czechoslovak Republic, 1918–1948* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1973); Věra Olivová, *The Doomed Democracy: Czechoslovakia in a Disrupted Europe, 1914–38* (London: Sidgwick and Jackson, 1972); and Alice Teichova, *The Czechoslovak Economy, 1918–1980* (London: Routledge, 1988).

12. For examples of scholarship based on research in Czech and Slovak archives, see Chad Carl Bryant, *Prague in Black: Nazi Rule and Czech Nationalism* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2007); Melissa Feinberg, *Elusive Equality: Gender, Citizenship, and the Limits of Democracy in Czechoslovakia, 1918–1950* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2006); Benjamin Frommer, *National Cleansing: Retribution against Nazi Collaborators in Postwar Czechoslovakia* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005); Eagle Glassheim, *Noble Nationalists: The Transformation of the Bohemian Aristocracy* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2005); Jeremy King, *Budweisers into Czechs and Germans: A Local History of Bohemian Politics, 1848–1948* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2002); Cynthia Paces, *Prague Panoramas: National Memory*

and *Sacred Space in the Twentieth Century* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2009); Tara Zahra, *Kidnapped Souls: National Indifference and the Battle for Children in the Bohemian Lands, 1900–1948* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2008).

13. Anděl, *New Vision for the New Architecture*, 6.

14. Eric J. Jenkins, “The Bata Shoe Company’s Elevator-Office in Zlin,” *Centropa* 7, no. 3 (2007): 254.

15. Bucking this trend are two edited volumes that each contain chapters on architecture: Rostislav Švácha and Marie Platovská, eds., *Dějiny českého výtvarného umění V., 1939–1958* [Histories of Czech Creative Arts, vol. 5] (Prague: Academia, 2005), and Polana Bregantová, Rostislav Švácha, and Marie Platovská, eds., *Dějiny českého výtvarného umění VI., 1958–2000* [Histories of Czech Creative Arts, vol. 6] (Prague: Academia, 2007). Other examples are Karel Dušek, ed., *Česká architektura, 1945–1995 / Czech Architecture, 1945–1995* (Prague: Obec architektů, 1995); Pavel Halík, “Ideologická architektura” [Ideological Architecture], *Umění* 44, no. 5 (1996): 438–60; Eva Pýchová, “Česká bytová výstavba v období 1945–1964” [Czech Residential Building, 1945–1964], *Umění* 54, no. 5 (2006): 420–32.

16. Teige, *Minimum Dwelling*, xxiv.

17. Michal Kohout, Vladimír Šlapeta, and Stephan Templ, eds., *Prague: 20th-Century Architecture* (Vienna: Springer, 1999), 12.

18. See, for example, Bregantová, Švácha, and Platovská, eds., *Dějiny českého výtvarného umění VI., 1958–2000*; Daniela Kramerová and Vanda Skálová, eds., *Bruselský sen: československá účast na světové výstavě Expo 58 v Bruselu a životní styl 1. poloviny 60. let* [Brussels Dream: Czechoslovak Participation in Expo ’58 in Brussels and the Lifestyle of the Early 1960s] (Prague: Arbor vitae, 2008); Miroslav Masák, *Architekti SIAL* [SIAL Architects] (Prague: Kant, 2008); Rostislav Švácha, ed., *SIAL* (Olomouc: Arbor vitae and Muzeum umění Olomouc, 2010); Švácha and Platovská, eds., *Dějiny českého výtvarného umění V., 1939–1958*.

19. Teige, *Minimum Dwelling*, xxiv–xxv.

20. On the scenario in the Yugoslav case, see Vladimír Kulić, “‘East? West? Or Both?’: Foreign Perceptions of Architecture in Socialist Yugoslavia,” *Journal of Architecture* 14, no. 1 (2009): 87–105; Vladimír Kulić, “Land of the In-Between: Modern Architecture and Politics in Socialist Yugoslavia, 1945–65” (PhD diss., University of Texas at Austin, 2009). On the Hungarian debates, see Virag Molnar, “In Search of the Ideal Socialist Home in Post-Stalinist Hungary: Prefabricated Mass Housing or Do-It-Yourself Family Home?” *Journal of Design History* 23, no. 1 (2010): 61–81.

21. Some examples of this broader historical discussion include Bradley F. Abrams, *The Struggle for the Soul of the Nation: Czech Culture and the Rise of Communism* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2004); John Connelly, *Captive University: The Sovietization of East German, Czech, and Polish Higher Education, 1945–1956* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2000); Eagle Glassheim, “Ethnic Cleansing, Communism, and Environmental Devastation in Czechoslovakia’s Borderlands, 1945–1989,” *Journal of Modern History* 78, no. 1 (2006): 65–92; Jiří Knapík, *Únor a kultura: sověťizace české kultury 1948–1950* [February and Culture: The Sovietization of Czech Culture] (Prague: Libri, 2004).

22. Abrams, *Struggle for the Soul of the Nation*, 53–88.

23. For discussions of Slovak participation, see Radomír Luža, “Czechoslovakia between Democracy and Communism, 1945–1948,” in *A History of the Czechoslovak Republic, 1918–1948*, ed. Radomír Luža and Victor S. Mamatey (Princeton: Prince-

- ton University Press, 1973), 387–95; and Martin R. Myant, *Socialism and Democracy in Czechoslovakia, 1945–1948* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), 91–104.
24. For a list of ministers and their affiliations, see Myant, *Socialism and Democracy in Czechoslovakia*, 49–50.
 25. Zdeněk Radvanovský, “The Social and Economic Consequences of Resettling Czechs into Northwestern Bohemia, 1945–47,” in *Redrawing Nations: Ethnic Cleansing in East-Central Europe, 1944–1948*, ed. Philipp Ther and Ana Siljak (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2001), 243.
 26. Feinberg, *Elusive Equality*, 193.
 27. Luža, “Czechoslovakia between Democracy and Communism,” 391, 393.
 28. Feinberg, *Elusive Equality*, 193.
 29. Myant, *Socialism and Democracy in Czechoslovakia*, 57.
 30. *Ibid.*, 53–54.
 31. Abrams, *Struggle for the Soul of the Nation*, 94. See also Edward Taborsky, *Communism in Czechoslovakia, 1948–1960* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1961), esp. 22–161, 471–594.
 32. Abrams, *Struggle for the Soul of the Nation*, 92.
 33. Luža, “Czechoslovakia between Democracy and Communism,” 404.
 34. Abrams, *Struggle for the Soul of the Nation*, 92–103.
 35. The term *genuine coalition* is from Hugh Seton-Watson, *The East European Revolution* (New York: Praeger, 1951), 169–70.
 36. Boris P. Pešek, *Gross National Product of Czechoslovakia in Monetary and Real Terms, 1946–58* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1965), 2. Czechoslovakia was too far from Anglo-American bomber bases to be reached by warplanes.
 37. Jan M. Michal, “Postwar Economic Development,” in *A History of the Czechoslovak Republic, 1918–1948*, ed. Radomír Luža and Victor S. Mamatey (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1973), 430n4. Archival documents from 1946 in the Ministry of Technology files confirm that most of the destruction was in Moravian Silesia (near Ostrava and Opava) and Slovakia.
 38. *Ibid.*; Jiří Voženílek, “Nová výstavba Zlína” [The New Construction of Zlín], *Architektura ČSR* 6, no. 3 (1947): 70.
 39. To support his claims, economist Boris Pešek noted that citizens of German descent owned 20 percent of the wealth in Czechoslovakia before they were expelled from the country in 1945–1946. He claimed that after the war the Czechoslovakian government controlled most of the “productive facilities” in the country, because, in addition to existing government holdings it now also possessed the property of expelled Germans and Jews killed in the war, along with Nazi enterprises that ended up in Czechoslovak hands. See Pešek, *Gross National Product of Czechoslovakia in Monetary and Real Terms*, 2. John N. Stevens argues the same and quotes Pešek extensively; see John N. Stevens, *Czechoslovakia at the Crossroads: The Economic Dilemmas of Communism in Postwar Czechoslovakia* (Boulder, CO: East European Monographs, 1985), 8.
 40. Teichova, *Czechoslovak Economy*, 121.
 41. Michal, “Postwar Economic Development,” 430.
 42. Myant, *Socialism and Democracy in Czechoslovakia*, 56, 185–86.
 43. Joseph B. Schechtman, “Postwar Population Transfers in Europe: A Survey,” *Review of Politics* 15, no. 2 (April 1953): 170.
 44. Jaroslav Krejčí and Pavel Machonin, *Czechoslovakia, 1918–92: A Laboratory for Social Change* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1996), 34–37. Accurate numbers of Jewish

populations after 1938 are hard to determine. Populations were mobile and nationality claims fluid. "Jewish" was both a religion and an ethnic category; many more people claimed it as their religion on census forms than claimed it as their ethnicity. One accepted number is that there were 118,000 Jews in Bohemia and Moravia in 1939 after Germany took control of the Sudetenland; 77,000 of them died in concentration camps. See Frommer, *National Cleansing*, 25–26; and Luža and Mamatey, eds., *History of the Czechoslovak Republic*, 426.

45. Radvanovský, "Social and Economic Consequences of Resettling Czechs into Northwestern Bohemia," 243.

46. Glassheim, "Ethnic Cleansing, Communism, and Environmental Devastation in Czechoslovakia's Borderlands," 68.

47. Myant, *Socialism and Democracy in Czechoslovakia*, 63–67; Schechtman, "Post-war Population Transfers in Europe," 156.

48. John Shute, "Czechoslovakia's Territorial and Population Changes," *Economic Geography* 24, no. 1 (1948): 39.

49. See Glassheim, "Ethnic Cleansing, Communism, and Environmental Devastation in Czechoslovakia's Borderlands," 68–73; Myant, *Socialism and Democracy in Czechoslovakia*, 63–75; Martin R. Myant, *The Czechoslovak Economy, 1948–1988: The Battle for Economic Reform* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 137–42; Stevens, *Czechoslovakia at the Crossroads*, 214–20.

50. Chad Carl Bryant, "Either German or Czech: Fixing Nationality in Bohemia and Moravia, 1939–1946," *Slavic Review* 61, no. 4 (2002): 683.

51. Nancy M. Wingfield, "The Politics of Memory: Constructing National Identity in the Czech Lands, 1945 to 1948," *East European Politics and Societies* 14, no. 3 (2000): 246.

52. *Ibid.*, 256–64.

53. The vernacular interest can be seen in the work of architects such as Dušan Jurkovič. See Christopher Long, "'The Works of Our People': Dušan Jurkovič and the Slovak Art Revival," *Studies in the Decorative Arts* 12, no. 1 (fall–winter 2004–2005): 2–29. On the Slovaks, see Dulla and Moravčíková, *20th-Century Architecture in Slovakia*; and Ladislav Foltyn, *Slovenská architektúra a česká avantgarda 1918–1939* [Slovak Architecture and the Czech Avant-Garde] (Bratislava: Spolku architektov Slovenska, 1993).

54. Adrian von Arburg, "Tak či onak: Nucené přesídlení v komplexním pojetí poválečné sídelní politiky v českých zemích" [One Way or the Other: Czechoslovak Resettlement Policy and Its Effects in the Bohemian Lands after World War II], *Soudobé dějiny* 10, no. 3 (2003): 253.

55. *Ibid.*, 329. Borderland areas voted between 50 and 60 percent for the Communists, the highest rates in the country. For election results, see Jiří Sláma and Karel Kaplan, *Die Parlamentswahlen in der Tschechoslowakei 1935 – 1946 – 1948: Eine statistische Analyse* [The Parliamentary Elections in Czechoslovakia 1935–1946–1948: A Statistical Analysis] (Munich: Oldenbourg, 1986), 41–42, 59–67.

56. Karel Janů, *Nájemné z bytů v pohraničí* [Rent from Apartments in the Borderlands] (Prague: Svoboda, 1946), 15.

57. Radvanovský, "Social and Economic Consequences of Resettling Czechs into Northwestern Bohemia," 244.

58. *Ibid.*, 253.

CHAPTER 1. PHOENIX RISING

Epigraph: “Memorandum Bloku architektonických pokrokových spolků o nutnosti organisace práce v oboru architektury, plánování a stavebnictví” [Statement of the Block of Progressive Architectural Organizations about the Necessity of Organizing Work in the Fields of Architecture, Planning, and Construction], Nov. 22, 1945, 5, fond 1261/2/20: Ústřední kulturně propagační komise a kulturně propagační oddělení UV KSČ [Central Cultural-Propaganda Commission and the Cultural-Propaganda Department of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia] (henceforth ÚKPK), carton 636, Národní archiv [National Archives, henceforth NA], Prague, Czech Republic.

1. “Padlým architektům” [To the Fallen Architects], *Architektura ČSR* 5, no. 10 (1946): 291–322. *Architektura ČSR* was created in 1939 by the merger of three other journals: *Stavba*, *Stavitel*, and *Styl*. It ran until 1990, ceasing publication only once, from 1943 to 1945. Oldřich Starý, editor of *Stavba*, became the editor of *Architektura ČSR*, a post he held on and off into the 1960s. He was also the president of BAPS. As expected, the war also took its toll on the health of architects who had survived. Well-known figures in the modern movement, Josef Gočár and Kamil Roškot died in the fall of 1945 at ages sixty-five and fifty-nine, respectively. Oldřich Starý, “Architekt Prof. Josef Gočár” [Professor of Architecture Josef Gočár], *Architektura ČSR* 5, no. 3 (1946): 66–69; “Kamil Roškot,” *Architektura ČSR* 5, no. 3 (1946): 51–54; F.M. Černý, “Jak jsme znali Kamila Roškota” [The Kamil Roškot We Knew], *Architektura ČSR* 5, no. 3 (1946): 54–55.

2. For texts of the speeches, see “Spolupráce architektů na výstavbě státu: první veřejný projev Blok architektonických pokrokových spolků (BAPS) dne 17. července 1945” [The Collaboration of Architects in the Construction of the State: The First Public Event of the Block of Progressive Architectural Associations on July 17, 1945], *Architektura ČSR* 5, no. 1 (1946): 2–24. Quote from Václav Hilský, “3 – Organizace BAPS” [Speech 3: The Organization of BAPS], 6.

3. “Spolupráce architektů na výstavbě státu,” 2.

4. Bradley F. Abrams, *The Struggle for the Soul of the Nation: Czech Culture and the Rise of Communism* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2004), 104–17.

5. Two well-known publications on these themes by members of the interwar avant-garde are Jiří Kroha, *Sociologický fragment bydlení: instruktážní a fotomontážní dokumentace cyklu z roku 1932/33* [The Sociological Housing Fragment: Instructional and Photomontage Documentary Cycle from 1932–33] (Brno: Krajské středisko státní památkové péče a ochrany přírody, 1973); and Karel Teige, *The Minimum Dwelling*, trans. Eric Dluhosch (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2002). Teige’s book was originally published in 1932 as *Nejmenší byt*. See also Klaus Spechtenhauser, “Sociological Functionalism: On the Sociological Housing Fragment by Jiří Kroha,” in *Jiří Kroha (1893–1974): Architect, Painter, Designer, Theorist; A 20th-Century Metamorphosis*, ed. Marcela Macharačková (Brno: ERA and Muzeum města Brna, 2007), 226–71.

6. Rostislav Švácha, Sona Ryndová, and Pavla Pokorná, eds., *Forma sleduje vědu / Form Follows Science* (Prague: Jaroslav Fragner Gallery, 2000), 95. For an analysis of the economy from 1945 to 1948, see Jan M. Michal, “Postwar Economic Development,” in *A History of the Czechoslovak Republic, 1918–1948*, ed. Radomír Luža and Victor S. Mamatey (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1973), 428–60.

7. Vlasta Štursová and Jan Vaněk at Svaz socialistických architektů [Union of Socialist Architects], Prague, to Sojuz sovětičeských architektov – V.O.K.S. [Union of Soviet-Czech Architects], Moscow, Jan. 28, 1946, ÚKPK, carton 636, NA.

8. The Two-Year Plan, scheduled for implementation in January 1947, was the

first attempt at economic planning in the country, and it tried to balance development between Slovak and Czech areas. Michal, "Postwar Economic Development," 443–44; Alice Teichova, *The Czechoslovak Economy, 1918–1980* (London: Routledge, 1988), 115–21. On the goal for housing, see Ladislav Machoň, "Příprava obcí k provádění stavebního programu budovatelského plánu vlády" [The Preparation of Communities for the Implementation of the Building Program of the Government's Reconstruction Plan], *Architektura ČSR* 5, no. 9 (1946): 260. The 125,000 figure came from a July 16, 1946, government resolution. See "Zápis o poradě konané podle vládního usnesení o přípravných opatřeních k provádění budovatelského programu vlády" [Minutes of the Meeting Called on the Government Resolution on the Preparatory Arrangements to Administer the Government Building Programs], Aug. 1, 1946, fond 996: Ministerstvo techniky [Ministry of Technology] (henceforth MT), carton 303, NA. Communists led the Ministries of Agriculture, Labor and Social Affairs, Education, Information, and the Interior.

9. "Memorandum Bloku architektonických pokrokových spolků," 1–8.

10. As Rostislav Švácha has shown, small-scale building continued during the war, especially outside of the cities. See Rostislav Švácha, "Architektura čtyřicátých let" [Architecture of the 1940s], in *Dějiny českého výtvarného umění V. (1939–1958)* [Histories of Czech Creative Arts, vol. 5, 1939–1958], ed. Rostislav Švácha and Marie Platovská (Prague: Academia, 2005), 31–73.

11. "Memorandum Bloku architektonických pokrokových spolků," 2. The work of Ladislav Žák in the late 1930s and 1940s was the primary catalyst for the agenda item regarding the relationship of people to their environment, which stood out among the other agenda items. See Ladislav Žák, *Obytná krajina* [The Inhabited Landscape] (Prague: S. V. U. Mánes, Svoboda, 1947). Architectural historian Dita Dvořáková has edited a collection of Žák's writings that includes an introductory essay. See Ladislav Žák and Dita Dvořáková, *Byt a krajina* [Dwelling and Landscape] (Prague: Arbor vitae, 2006).

12. "Zprávy Svazu socialistických architektů" [Newsletter of the Union of Socialist Architects], Sept. 1945, 1, ÚPKP, carton 636, NA.

13. See Matúš Dulla and Henrieta Moravčíková, *20th-Century Architecture in Slovakia* (Stuttgart: Art Stock, 2003); Michal Kohout, Vladimír Šlapeta, and Stephan Templ, eds., *Prague: 20th-Century Architecture* (Vienna: New York: Springer, 1999); Zdeněk Kudělka and Jindřich Chatrný, eds., *For New Brno: Brno's Architecture, 1919–1939* (Brno: Muzeum města Brna, 2000); Kudělka and Chatrný, eds., *O nové Brno: brněnská architektura, 1919–1939* (Brno: Muzeum města Brna, 2000); Marcela Macharačková, ed., *Jiří Kroha (1893–1974): Architect, Painter, Designer, Theorist: A 20th-Century Metamorphosis* (Brno: ERA and Muzeum města Brna, 2007); Rostislav Švácha, *The Architecture of New Prague, 1895–1945* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1995); Rostislav Švácha, *Jaromír Krejcar, 1895–1949* (Prague: Jaroslav Fagner Gallery, 1995); Švácha, Ryndová, and Pokorná, eds., *Forma sleduje vědu / Form Follows Science*; Stephan Templ, *Baba: The Werkbund Housing Estate Prague* (Basel: Birkhäuser, 1999).

14. Rostislav Švácha, *Devětsil: Czech Avant-Garde of the 1920s and 30s* (Oxford: Museum of Modern Art; London: Design Museum, 1990), 106–9.

15. Thomas Ort, "Art and Life in Avant-Garde Prague, 1920–1924," *Modern Intellectual History* 7, no. 1 (2010): 71.

16. *Ibid.*, 72.

17. Peter A. Zusi, "The Style of the Present: Karel Teige on Constructivism and Poetism," *Representations* 88 (autumn 2004): 113, 115. Rostislav Švácha is less convinced than Zusi about the potential for the constructivist/poetist synthesis. See Rostislav

Švácha, "Before and After the Mundaneum: Karel Teige as Theoretician of the Architectural Avant-Garde," in *Karel Teige, 1900–1951: L'Enfant Terrible of the Czech Modernist Avant-Garde*, ed. Eric Dluhosch and Rostislav Švácha (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1999), 113–18.

18. In terms of politics, Teige was a sympathizer rather than an actual member of the Communist Party, a circumstance that would become problematic for him after 1945. For various interpretations of his theoretical wanderings, see the essays in Dluhosch and Švácha, eds., *Karel Teige*; Ort, "Art and Life in Avant-Garde Prague"; Karel Teige, *Modern Architecture in Czechoslovakia and Other Writings*, trans. Irena Žantovská Murray and David Britt (Los Angeles: Getty Research Institute, 2000); and Zusi, "Style of the Present," 102–24.

19. On Teige's knowledge of Soviet architecture, see Rostislav Švácha, "Form Follows Science: Karel Teige and Czech Scientific Functionalism, 1922–1948," in *Forma sleduje vědu / Form Follows Science*, ed. Rostislav Švácha, Sona Ryndová, and Pavla Pokorná (Prague: Jaroslav Fragner Gallery, 2000), 43. On Teige's response to the competition, see Švácha, "Before and After the Mundaneum," 129–34. On the competition itself, see Sona Stephan Hoisington, "'Ever Higher': The Evolution of the Project for the Palace of Soviets," *Slavic Review* 62, no. 1 (spring 2003): 41–68.

20. Švácha, "Before and After the Mundaneum," 118. Meyer took over as the director of the Bauhaus in 1928 following the departure of founder Walter Gropius. He served until 1930, when he was fired for his vocal communist stance. He then lived in the Soviet Union until 1936, when he returned to Switzerland. He later moved to Mexico.

21. Švácha, "Form Follows Science," 37–50, 60–79, 89–97.

22. *Ibid.*, 20.

23. *Ibid.*, 21–22 (original emphasis).

24. *Ibid.*, 48.

25. *Ibid.*, 49.

26. Švácha, "Before and After the Mundaneum," 119–22; Zusi, "Style of the Present," 102–24.

27. An example of the ongoing debate comes from the year 1974, when, during a renewed debate about form versus function in architecture, the influential architecture journal *Oppositions* reprinted the translated text of Teige's objection to Le Corbusier's use of classicism. See Karel Teige, "Karel Teige's 'Mundaneum' (1929)," in *Oppositions Reader*, ed. K. Michael Hays (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1998), 589–97.

28. Many Devětsil members also left the Communist Party after 1929, when the group was Stalinized under the leadership of the country's future president, Klement Gottwald. Ort, "Art and Life in Avant-Garde Prague," 72.

29. For more on Teige and CIAM, see Dluhosch and Švácha, eds., *Karel Teige*, esp. 140–255.

30. Otakar Nový, "Čtvrtstoleté jubileum založení Stavoprojektu" [The Twenty-Fifth Anniversary of the Establishment of Stavoprojekt], *Architektura ČSR* 321, no. 10 (1973): 483.

31. See Macharačková, ed., *Jiří Kroha*.

32. On Teige's activities in the 1930s, see Dluhosch and Švácha, eds., *Karel Teige*; Teige, *Modern Architecture in Czechoslovakia and Other Writings*; and Teige, *Minimum Dwelling*.

33. Švácha, "Before and After the Mundaneum," 130. See also Karel Teige, *Sovětská architektura* [Soviet Architecture] (Prague: J. Prokopová, 1936).

34. Žák, *Obytná krajina*, 7–21. See also Švácha, “Before and After the Mundaneum,” 130–34; Švácha, “Form Follows Science,” 89–97; Žák and Dvořáková, *Byt a krajina*.

35. The first and shortest version appeared as Karel Teige, “Moderní architektura v Československu,” *Veraikon* 10, no. 11–12 (1924). The second, written in 1927, was published in 1930 as Karel Teige, *Moderní architektura v Československu / L'Architecture moderne en Tchécoslovaquie / Neues Bauen in der Tschechoslowakei* [Modern Architecture in Czechoslovakia] (Prague: Odeon and Jan Fromek, 1930). An English translation appeared in 2000; see Teige, *Modern Architecture in Czechoslovakia and Other Writings*.

36. The 1947 publication was the third version of the text. See Karel Teige, *Modern Architecture in Czechoslovakia / L'Architecture moderne en Tchécoslovaquie* (Prague: Czechoslovak Ministry of Information, 1947).

37. “Vědecké metody architektonické práce” [Scientific Methods of Architectural Work], in *Za socialistickou architekturu: publikace sjezdu levých architektů v Praze 29.X.–1.XI.1932* [On Sociological Architecture: The Publication of the Congress of Left Architects in Prague, Oct. 29–Nov. 1, 1932], ed. Karel Teige (Prague: Levá fronta, 1933), discussed in Švácha, “Form Follows Science,” 69.

38. Karel Janů, Jiří Štursa, and Jiří Voženílek, *Architektura a společnost: vývoj architektury za kapitalismu a úkoly socialistického architekta; zásady a program socialistických architektů* [Architecture and Community: The Development of Architecture during Capitalism and the Work of the Socialist Architect; The Principles and Program of Socialist Architects] (Prague: Levá fronta, 1933).

39. Karel Janů, Jiří Štursa, and Jiří Voženílek, “Is Scientific Synthesis Possible in Architecture?” in *Forma sleduje vědu / Form Follows Science*, ed. Rostislav Švácha, Sona Ryndová, and Pavla Pokorná (Prague: Jaroslav Fragner Gallery, 2000), 258. Originally published as “Je možná vědecká syntéza v architektuře?” *Magazín DP* 4 (1936–1937): 176–82.

40. Examples of these later projects include the Volman Villa in Čelákovice by Janů and Štursa from 1937–1938 and an apartment house in Prague-Holešovice by Janů from 1938–1939.

41. The files of the Ministry of Building (Ministerstvo stavebnictví) are at the National Archives in Prague, but they are uncatalogued and therefore inaccessible.

42. Otakar Nový, “In memoriam profesora Jiřího Voženíleka” [In Memory of Professor Jiří Voženílek], *Architektura ČSR* 46, no. 4 (1987): 346–47. For more on his ministerial work, see fond 976: Státní výbor pro výstavbu [State Committee for Construction], NA.

43. Karel Pilát, “Výstavba vzorných sídlišť a jejich poslání” [The Construction of the Model Housing Developments and Their Mission], *Architektura ČSR* 7, no. 6–7 (1948): 201–6.

44. Oldřich Starý, “Pomník J. V. Stalina v Praze” [Monument of J. V. Stalin in Prague], *Architektura ČSR* 9, no. 3–4 (1950): 63–69.

45. Marie Hořínková, *Příběhy pražských zahrad* [Stories of Prague's Gardens] (Prague: Academia, 2004), 124.

46. See letters written by Stibor to the Czechoslovak Building Works and the Ministry of Technology in MT, carton 429, NA.

47. Švácha, “Form Follows Science,” 69, 78 (illustrations occur in between).

48. *Ibid.*, 96.

49. Nový, “Čtvrtstoleté jubileum založení Stavoprojektu” [The Twenty-Fifth Anniversary of the Establishment of Stavoprojekt], 483. The building commission's members included Nový, Janů, Voženílek, Stibor, and the Štursas. Nový stated that “the

most famous theoreticians of the Union of Socialist Architects”—Karel Honzík, Ladislav Žák, Oldřich Starý, and Jiří Kroha—collaborated directly with this commission. In this context, Nový described being part of the “‘passed over’ generation” (*mezigenerace “pasistů”*), the last generation to attend the architecture schools before the Nazis shut them down. He described a lineage of leftist architects that began with Devětsil, led to the Architectural Working Group, and then to the “passed over” architects. In his account, each generation was taught by the one before it, so Architectural Working Group members were his generation’s mentors. In fact, Nový wrote Voženílek’s obituary in 1987; see Nový, “In memoriam profesora Jiřího Voženíleka” [In Memory of Professor Jiří Voženílek], 346–47.

50. The first elected leader of the Central Council of Trade Unions was Antonín Zápotocký, one of the cofounders of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia and a future prime minister and president. See Karel Kovanda, “Work Councils in Czechoslovakia, 1945–47,” *Soviet Studies* 29, no. 2 (1977): 255–69.

51. Nový, “Čtvrtstoleté jubileum založení Stavoprojektu” [The Twenty-Fifth Anniversary of the Establishment of Stavoprojekt], 483.

52. “Zprávy Svazu socialistických architektů, č.2” [Newsletter of the Union of Socialist Architects, no. 2], Jan. 1946, 4, ÚKPK, carton 636, NA. The group met every other week at a local social club.

53. Svaz socialistických architektů [Union of Socialist Architects] to Ústředí komunistické strany čsl. [Central Office of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia], Oct. 15, 1945, ÚKPK, carton 636, NA. There is no Communist Party membership list included with this letter, which said only that the Union of Socialist Architects was “composed mainly of architects who are members of the Communist Party.”

54. “Zprávy Svazu socialistických architektů,” Sept. 1945, 1. This structure did have some problems, because Kroha was living in Brno. At one point, he became angry that Vaněk was signing letters as “president” of the Union of Socialist Architects. He wrote to Štursová to say that he was “very surprised” when he received a bulletin that Vaněk signed as president. She responded to Kroha saying that it was just an “oversight” and that “you are the only president.” Jiří Kroha to Svaz socialistických architektů [Union of Socialist Architects]/Vlasta Štursová, Feb. 13, 1946; Svaz socialistických architektů [Union of Socialist Architects] to Jiří Kroha, February 25, 1946, both in ÚKPK, carton 636, NA.

55. Affidavit from Svaz socialistických architektů [Union of Socialist Architects] on Jiří Voženílek’s activities during the occupation, Dec. 17, 1947, ÚKPK, carton 636, NA.

56. “Memorandum Bloku architektonických pokrokových spolků,” 2.

57. “Kandidátka výboru Svazu architektů” [Candidate for the board of the Architects’ Union], Mar. 22, 1953, Voženílek, ÚKPK, carton 637, NA. It is possible that his decision to wait so long was influenced by the Baťa Corporation, which was anti-union and anticommunist.

58. “Kandidátka výboru Svazu architektů” [Candidate for the board of the Architects’ Union], Mar. 22, 1953. The term “Marxism-Leninism” is used to distinguish the Soviet vision of Marxism, as put forward by Lenin and later by Stalin, from that of Marx and Engels. Scholars such as Z. A. Jordan generally agree that Marxism-Leninism should be understood as a worldview distinct from classic Marxism since it was formulated to address the specific nature of the Soviet Union in the early twentieth century and the requirement that the economic system be introduced in a single, unindustrialized country.

59. "Zprávy Svazu socialistických architektů," Sept. 1945, 1.
60. Z. A. Jordan, "The Dialectical Materialism of Lenin," *Slavic Review* 25, no. 2 (1967): 260. See Vladimir Illich Lenin, *Collected Works*, vol. 14 (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1972), 17–362.
61. Raymond Williams, *Culture and Materialism: Selected Essays* (London: Verso, 2005), 103.
62. Eagle Glassheim, "Ethnic Cleansing, Communism, and Environmental Devastation in Czechoslovakia's Borderlands, 1945–1989," *Journal of Modern History* 78, no. 1 (2006): 68.
63. See KPSS, TsK, *History of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (Bolsheviks): Short Course* (New York: International Publishers, 1939), 105–31. More than 652,000 copies of the Czech translation of the book were distributed in Czechoslovakia from 1950 to 1954. See Edward Taborsky, *Communism in Czechoslovakia, 1948–1960* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1961), 565.
64. KPSS, TsK, *History of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (Bolsheviks)*, 119–20 (original emphasis).
65. "Zprávy Svazu socialistických architektů," Sept. 1945, 1.
66. KPSS, TsK, *History of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (Bolsheviks)*, 115.
67. Stanislav Semrád, "6 - Poslání architekta a organizace jeho práce" [Speech 6: The Mission of the Architect and the Organization of His Work], *Architektura ČSR* 5, no. 1 (1946): 11.
68. Karel Janů, "4 - Organizace stavebnictví" [Speech 4: The Organization of the Building Industry], *Architektura ČSR* 5, no. 1 (1946): 7.
69. František Jungmann, "10 - Co očekávají odbory od práce architekta" [Speech 10: What the Trade Unions Are Expecting from the Work of Architects], *Architektura ČSR* 5, no. 1 (1946): 16.
70. Ibid.
71. There is some evidence that Starý, as the editor of a journal produced for three associations (the Architects' Club, Architects' Alliance, and Architects' Society), was seen as a consensus builder. In a letter to BAPS in November 1947, the Architects' Society cited *Architektura ČSR* as a good example of cooperation among groups espousing various ideologies. See Architects' Society [Špolečnost architektů] to BAPS, Nov. 30, 1947, ÚKPK, carton 636, NA. A subsequent letter on the same topic complained that the supposed "federal organization" of BAPS was a sham. Architects' Society to BAPS, Dec. 8, 1947, ÚKPK, carton 636, NA.
72. The seven professional architectural associations were the Architectural Group of S.V.Ú. Mánes [Skupina architektů při S.V.Ú Mánes], the Architectural Group of the Association of Czech Architects and Engineers [Skupina architektů při Spolek českých inženýrů a architektů, or SIA], the Architects' Alliance [Sdružení architektů], the Architects' Club [Klub architektů], the Architects' Federation [Federace architektů], the Architects' Society [Společnost architektů], and the Association of Academic Architects [Asociace akademických architektů]. See "Charakteristika spolků českých architektů" [Characteristics of the Associations of Czech Architects], undated, ÚKPK, carton 363, NA. Each one had a particular profile. For example, the Architects' Federation protected the interests of the "progressive or socialist" graduates of the special ateliers at Vysoká škola uměleckoprůmyslová (UMPRUM, the Academy of Arts, Architecture, and Design). The Architects' Club had a technocratic point of view and was sympathetic to the Soviet Union; it published *Stavba*. The architectural wing of SIA had been a conservative orga-

nization in the interwar period, but, “influenced by its younger members” after the war, it reorganized and joined BAPS; it published *Architekt* until 1944. With the exception of Starý and Vice President Jan Vaněk, there is no record of other BAPS officers. It appears that each association nominated its own representatives to attend BAPS meetings. See “Blok architektonických pokrokových spolků u Prezidenta Republiky” [BAPS at the Office of the President of the Republic], *Architektura ČSR* 5, no. 5 (1946): 156.

73. “Memorandum Bloku architektonických pokrokových spolků,” 1. The total number of architects in Bohemia was 550, with about 450 of those in Prague. See Společnost architektů [Architects’ Society] to BAPS, Nov. 30, 1947, ÚKPK, carton 636, NA. There were only about 80 architects active in Slovakia in 1946, and 59 of them belonged to the Slovak organization, Spolek architektov Slovenska [Association of Slovak Architects]. See Štátní plánovací a statistický úřad, Bratislava [State Planning and Statistical Office, Bratislava], “Dvojroční plán – Upravovací plány obcí na Slovensku” [The Two-Year Plan: Reconstruction Plans for the Districts of Slovakia], Sept. 4, 1946, 6, MT, carton 303, NA. There was a discussion in 1947 about bringing the Moravian-Silesian group into BAPS as a constituent organization, but its leadership objected on the basis of their members’ “professional” rather than “ideological” orientation. This situation indicated that there were architects who did not belong to a BAPS association; a letter mentioned architects with “conceptual differences” who could not be “autonomous” as part of BAPS. See Ústředí moravskoslezských architektů – odbočka Zlín [Central Office of Moravian-Silesian Architects, Zlín branch] to Ústředí moravskoslezských architektů v Brně [Central Office of Moravian-Silesian Architects in Brno], Jan. 23, 1946, ÚKPK, carton 636, NA.

74. Martin R. Myant, *Socialism and Democracy in Czechoslovakia, 1945–1948* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), 106.

75. KPSS, TsK, *History of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (Bolsheviks)*, 119.

76. Another indication of architecture’s unique status is that historians have excluded architecture from most discussions of “cultural politics” in this period. See, for example, Jiří Doležal, *Česká kultura za protektorátu* [Czech Culture in the Protectorate] (Prague: Národní filmový archiv, 1996); Jiří Knapík, *Únor a kultura: sovětizace české kultury 1948–1950* [February and Culture: The Sovietization of Czech Culture] (Prague: Libri, 2004); Alexej Kusák, *Kultura a politika v Československu 1945–1956* [Culture and Politics in Czechoslovakia] (Prague: Torst, 1998).

77. Semrád, “6 - Poslání architekta a organisace jeho práce” [Speech 6: The Mission of the Architect and the Organization of His Work], 11.

78. Svaz socialistických architektů [Union of Socialist Architects] to Ústřední komunistické strany čsl. [Central Offices of the Communist Party], Oct. 15, 1945, ÚKPK, carton 636, NA.

79. Ibid.

80. For general information on action committees, see John Connelly, *Captive University: The Sovietization of East German, Czech, and Polish Higher Education, 1945–1956* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2000); and Knapík, *Únor a kultura*.

81. Společnost architektů [Architects’ Society] to BAPS, Nov. 30, 1947, ÚKPK, carton 636, NA. See also Ústředí moravskoslezských architektů – odbočka Zlín [Central Office of Moravian-Silesian Architects, Zlín branch] to Ústředí moravskoslezských architektů v Brně [Central Office of Moravian-Silesian Architects in Brno], Jan. 23, 1946, ÚKPK, carton 636, NA.

82. Bulletins to Spolkům BAPS [BAPS Associations], Oct. 10, 1946, Feb. 19, 1946,

Sept. 27, 1946, all in ÚKPK, carton 636, NA. In the October 1946 bulletin, the city of Domažlice advertised for a “young architect to be head of the city building department.” That issue also listed the names and contact information of three young architects looking for work.

83. Bulletin to Spolkům BAPS [BAPS Associations], Jan. 24, 1946, ÚKPK, carton 636, NA.

84. President Beneš signed the Nationalization Decree on October 24, 1945. According to Alice Teichova, all “mining, electricity supply, iron and steel, armaments, the chemical and pharmaceutical industry, cellulose production, cement works, sugar refineries and distilleries, as well as all banks and insurance companies” were “taken into public ownership.” In other industries, businesses with more than 500 employees were taken. For industries “in the national interest,” this number could be as low as 150 employees. Teichova, *Czechoslovak Economy*, 102.

85. “Memorandum Bloku architektonických pokrokových spolků,” 3.

86. BAPS recognized this problem. In December 1947, the organization approached the Ministry of Technology for funding to create a photographic “archive of the work of its members.” The photographs would be used to advertise the members’ work nationally and internationally as well as assist the ministry in deciding which architects might be suitable for particular projects. BAPS to Ministerstvo techniky [Ministry of Technology], Dec. 15, 1947, ÚKPK, carton 636, NA. The response from the ministry does not survive, although the timing suggests that the Communist takeover in February 1948 would have interrupted the effort.

87. Švácha, “Architektura čtyřicátých let” [Architecture of the 1940s], 31–73.

88. In June 1945, the government announced the first postwar public architectural competition to rebuild Lidice, a town destroyed by the Nazis in 1942, on a site near the original settlement. See *Architektura ČSR* 5, no. 4 (1946): 81–116. Archival documents related to the competition and rebuilding can be found in MT, carton 304, NA.

89. Despite the numerous entries for the Town Hall competition, none of the designs was awarded first prize and nothing was built. See Oldřich Starý, “Veřejná soutěž na staroměstskou radnici” [The Public Competition for the Town Hall on Old Town Square], *Architektura ČSR* 6, no. 2 (1947): 37–50; and Max Urban, “Úprava staroměstského náměstí v radniční soutěži 1946” [The Layout of Old Town Square in the Town Hall Competition 1946], *Architektura ČSR* 6, no. 2 (1947): 51–53. On the Litvínov project, see Stanislav Semrád, “Kolektivní dům Stalinových závodů” [The Collective House of the Stalin Works], *Architektura ČSR* 5, no. 7 (1946): 194–203; and Miroslav Tryzna, “Poznámky k soutěži Stalinových závodů” [Comments on the Stalin Works Competition], *Architektura ČSR* 5, no. 7 (1946): 204–24.

90. The only other architectural publication at the time was *Stavebnictví* [The Building Industry], edited by Jiří Štursa from 1945 to 1952 and available in limited circulation.

91. “Spolupráce architektů na výstavbě státu” [The Collaboration of Architects in the Construction of the State], 2–24.

92. Vlasta Štursova, “Zlín - první dokončené byty 2LP” [Zlín: The First Completed Apartments of the Two-Year Plan], *Architektura ČSR* 6, no. 6 (1947): 193.

93. Janů discussed this period in his life in a later book about industrial construction. See Karel Janů, *Průmyslová výroba staveb: budoucnost stavebnictví a architektury* [The Industrial Construction of Buildings: The Future of the Building Industry and Architecture] (Prague: SNTL, 1985), 39–51.

94. Vladimír Karfík, *Architekt si spomína* [An Architect Remembers] (Bratislava: Spolok architektov Slovenska, 1993), 140–41; Zdeněk Lukeš and Jan Sedlák, “Doznívání funkcionalismu” [The Last Traces of Functionalism], in *Česká architektura, 1945–1995 / Czech Architecture, 1945–1995*, ed. Karel Dušek (Prague: Obec architektů, 1995), 26.
95. Jiří Voženilek, “Nová výstavba Zlína” [The New Construction of Zlín], *Architektura ČSR* 6, no. 3 (1947): 69–84.
96. See Vladimír Czumalo, *Česká teorie architektury v letech okupace* [Czech Architectural Theory during the Occupation] (Prague: Univerzita Karlova and Karolinum, 1991).
97. For example, in 1939 and 1940, *Architektura ČSR* provided extensive coverage of the “Za novou architekturu” [Beyond New Architecture] exhibition, which sought to chronicle the development of “new” architecture from 1918 to 1940. The journal was also a sponsor of the exhibition. See *Architektura ČSR* 2 (1939) and *Architektura ČSR* 3 (1940).
98. Jaromír Krejcar, “Plánování nové výstavby poválečné Anglie” [The Planning of New Construction in Postwar England], *Architektura ČSR* 6, no. 2 (1947): 55–61; Jaromír Krejcar, “Ustavení mezinárodní Unie architektů” [The Establishment of an International Union of Architects], *Architektura ČSR* 6, no. 1 (1947): 32. For information on the Czechoslovak modernism exhibition Krejcar installed, see Vlasta Štursová, “Styk ministerstev s architekty” [The Relationship of Ministries with Architects], *Architektura ČSR* 7, no. 3 (1948): 109–12.
99. Ivan Šula, “Ze skandinávský cesty” [From the Scandinavian Journey], *Architektura ČSR* 6, no. 10 (1947): 308.
100. Jiří Gočár, Gustav Paul, and Karel Storch, “Poznatky z cesty do Švédska, Finska, and Dánska” [Lessons from a Journey to Sweden, Finland, and Denmark], *Architektura ČSR* 6, no. 10 (1947): 298–307; Karel Storch, “Bytové stavebnictví v Dánsku a Švédsku” [Housing Production in Denmark and Sweden], *Architektura ČSR* 6, no. 1 (1947): 26–27; Karel Storch, “Severská architektura” [Northern Architecture], *Architektura ČSR* 6, no. 10 (1947): 296–97; Šula, “Ze skandinávský cesty,” 308–9.
101. See, for example, Semrád, “6 - Poslání architekta a organizace jeho práce” [Speech 6: The Mission of the Architect and the Organization of His Work].
102. Oldřich Starý, “Veřejná soutěž na staroměstskou radnici” [The Public Competition for the Town Hall on Old Town Square], *Architektura ČSR* 6, no. 2 (1947): 37–47; Max Urban, “Úprava staroměstského náměstí v radniční soutěži 1946” [The Layout of Old Town Square in the Town Hall Competition 1946], *Architektura ČSR* 6, no. 2 (1947): 51–53; Václav Hlinský, “Stavba kolektivního domu v Litvínově” [The Construction of the Collective House in Litvínov], *Architektura ČSR* 18, no. 1 (1959): 18–35.
103. Antonín Ambler, “Ministerstvo techniky Odd. III/B - Projekt koldomu Stalinových závodů v Horní Litvínově” [Ministry of Technology Dept. III/B: The Project of the Stalin Works for a Koldom in Horní Litvínov], Apr. 10, 1947, 4, MT, carton 299, NA.
104. Oldřich Starý, “Soutěž Stalinových závodů” [The Stalin Works Competition], *Architektura ČSR* 5, no. 6 (1946): 193.
105. Květoslava Kocourková, “Nucené pracovní nasazení poláků, Ostarbeiterů, a válečných zajatců v říšské župě Sudety” [The Forced Labor of Displaced Poles, Ostarbeiters, and Prisoners of War in the Reich District of the Sudetenland], in *Museli pracovat pro Říši: nucené pracovní nasazení českého obyvatelstva v letech druhé světové války* [We Must Work for the Reich: The Forced Labor of Displaced Czech Citizens during the Second World War] (Prague: Státním ústředním archivem, 2004), 113–14. The Maltheuren enterprise became Chemopetrol and remains in operation as Unipetrol RPA. “Založení

společnosti - 70. výročí" [The Establishment of the Company: 70th Anniversary], Unipetrol RPA, <http://www.chemopetrol.cz/cs/o-nas/historie/vznik-zavodu.html> (accessed Apr. 2, 2010).

106. "Založení společnosti - 70. výročí" [The Establishment of the Company: 70th Anniversary].

107. Ambler, "Ministerstvo techniky Odd. III/B - Projekt koldomu Stalinových závodů v Horní Litvínově" [Ministry of Technology Dept. III/B: The Project of the Stalin Works for a Koldom in Horní Litvínov], 4.

108. Okresní národní výbor v Mostě [Local National Committee in Most], "Výměr" [Assessment], May 8, 1947, 2, MT, carton 299, NA.

109. Ambler, "Ministerstvo techniky Odd. III/B - Projekt koldomu Stalinových závodů v Horní Litvínově" [Ministry of Technology Dept. III/B: The Project of the Stalin Works for a Koldom in Horní Litvínov], 3.

110. Semrád, "Kolektivní dům Stalinových závodů" [The Collective House of the Stalin Works], 194.

111. For a discussion of a Russian example of the collective house, see Victor Buchli, "Moisei Ginzburg's Narkomfin Communal House in Moscow: Contesting the Social and Material World," *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 57, no. 2 (June 1998): 160–81.

112. The Architectural Working Group proposed a collective house in 1932. Jiří Štursa, "Naše architektura bojující" [Our Architecture Fighting], *Architektura ČSR* 18, no. 4 (1959): 201.

113. Ambler, "Ministerstvo techniky Odd. III/B - Projekt koldomu Stalinových závodů v Horní Litvínově" [Ministry of Technology Dept. III/B: The Project of the Stalin Works for a Koldom in Horní Litvínov], 4.

114. Okresní národní výbor v Mostě [Local National Committee in Most], "Výměr" [Assessment], 2.

115. Rostislav Švácha, "Funkcionalistická tvorba architekta Václava Hlinského" [The Functionalist Work of Architect Václav Hlinský], *Umění* 43, no. 1–2 (1995): 144. According to Švácha, Svitavský had been trained as an economist and architect, practicing successfully in Prague, Brno, and Bratislava before going to work for Baťa as an economic consultant. After the war, he was part of a group of experts who pushed the government to accept the U.S. Marshall Plan instead of Stalin's offer of help. He was hired to rebuild the factory in Záluží after it was bombed. The competition for housing was part of the rebuilding efforts, and Švácha writes that it would not have led to this result without Svitavský's participation.

116. Ambler, "Ministerstvo techniky Odd. III/B - Projekt koldomu Stalinových závodů v Horní Litvínově" [Ministry of Technology Dept. III/B: The Project of the Stalin Works for a Koldom in Horní Litvínov], 4.

117. *Ibid.*, 4–5. For a discussion of the environmental impact of industry in this area, see Glassheim, "Ethnic Cleansing, Communism, and Environmental Devastation in Czechoslovakia's Borderlands."

118. Semrád, "Kolektivní dům Stalinových závodů" [The Collective House of the Stalin Works], 194. Not surprisingly, this was also the location of Osada and Horní Litvínov.

119. Ambler, "Ministerstvo techniky Odd. III/B - Projekt koldomu Stalinových závodů v Horní Litvínově" [Ministry of Technology Dept. III/B: The Project of the Stalin Works for a Koldom in Horní Litvínov], 5.

120. Ibid., 6.

121. Because the design called for steel, the Ministry of Finance tried to block the project in 1947. Ministerstvo techniky [Ministry of Technology] to Ministerstvo financí [Ministry of Finance], Mar. 28, 1947, MT, carton 299, NA.

122. Semrád, “Kolektivní dům Stalinových závodů” [The Collective House of the Stalin Works], 194.

123. See *ibid.*, 194–224, for details of twelve of the project entries.

124. Švácha, *Architecture of New Prague*, 221–23.

125. Švácha, “Funkcionalistická tvorba architekta Václava Hilského” [The Functionalist Work of Architect Václav Hilský], 140.

126. Josef Pechar, *Václav Hilský: architektonické dílo* [Václav Hilský: Architectural Work] (Prague: Svaz architektů ČSR; Svaz českých výtvarných umělců; Český fond výtvarných umění; Krajský projektový ústav Praha, 1981).

127. Švácha, “Funkcionalistická tvorba architekta Václava Hilského” [The Functionalist Work of Architect Václav Hilský], 145 (quote), 145–46.

128. Kopecký became a strong and vocal advocate for Soviet-style socialist realism and was known as one of the more conservative and Sovietophile ministers of the time. The competition for the Stalin Monument was spearheaded by Kopecký in 1950. Although Kopecký and Linhart did not share the same radical politics, the former gave an emotional speech at Linhart’s burial that referred to their personal friendship. Václav Kopecký, “Evžen Linhart: projev na pohřbu” [Evžen Linhart: Speech at the Burial], *Architektura ČSR* 9, no. 1–2 (1950): 46–47.

129. The final total was 352 apartments, with 100 three-room units, 172 two-room units, and 80 one-room units. In 1959, there were 1,400 residents. Hilský, “Stavba kolektivního domu v Litvínově” [The Construction of the Collective House in Litvínov], 26.

130. Ambler, “Ministerstvo techniky Odd. III/B - Projekt koldomu Stalinových závodů v Horní Litvínově” [Ministry of Technology Dept. III/B: The Project of the Stalin Works for a Koldom in Horní Litvínov], 1.

131. Josef Havlíček, *Návrhy a stavby* [Projects and Buildings] (Prague: Státní nakladatelství technické literatury, 1964), 45–47; Jiří Hrůza, “Sídliště na Mostecku” [The Housing Developments of the Most Region], *Architektura ČSR* 17, no. 2 (1958): 60.

132. Hilský, “Stavba kolektivního domu v Litvínově” [The Construction of the Collective House in Litvínov], 21–23.

133. Ibid., 20.

134. The *Unité d’Habitation* was first published in *Architektura ČSR* in 1947, so it is difficult to know whether or not Hilský and Linhart were aware of the project. Linhart’s long association with Le Corbusier’s work would suggest, however, that he was aware of the project through the international press. In his 1981 essay on Hilský, architectural historian Josef Pechar calls the *Unité* and the Collective House in the Litvínov “the first realizations of their type in postwar Europe.” Pechar, *Václav Hilský: architektonické dílo*, n.p.

135. Ginzburg and Miliutin (who was the client for the Narkomfin project) were referenced as sources in *Architektura ČSR*. Semrád, “Kolektivní dům Stalinových závodů” [The Collective House of the Stalin Works], 194. On the Russian collective house type, see Victor Buchli, *An Archaeology of Socialism* (Oxford: Berg, 1999); Buchli, “Moisei Ginzburg’s Narkomfin Communal House in Moscow”; Jean-Louis Cohen, *Le Corbusier and the Mystique of the USSR: Theories and Projects for Moscow, 1928–1936* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992); and Kenneth Frampton, *Le Corbusier* (New York: Thames & Hudson, 2001), 150–66.

136. Frampton, *Le Corbusier*, 160.
137. Ministerstvo techniky to Ministerstvo financí, May 9, 1947, MT, carton 299, NA.
138. Semrád, "Kolektivní dům Stalinových závodů" [The Collective House of the Stalin Works], 194.
139. Josef Kittrich, "Dům společenského bydlení" [The House for Communal Living], *Architektura ČSR* 6, no. 1 (1947): 6.
140. For more on the gendered aspects of the Litvínov project and other housing proposals in the 1940s, see Hubert Gurzik and Marta Filipová, "The Diogenes Family: The Collectivization of Accommodation in Bohemia, 1905–1948," *Art in Translation* 1, no. 3 (Nov. 2009): 381–418; Kimberly Elman Zarecor, "Designing for the Socialist Family: The Evolution of Housing Types in Early Postwar Czechoslovakia," in *Gender Politics and Everyday Life in State Socialist Eastern and Central Europe*, ed. Jill Massino and Shana Penn (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), 151–68.
141. Ambler, "Ministerstvo techniky Odd. III/B - Projekt koldomu Stalinových závodů v Horní Litvínově" [Ministry of Technology Dept. III/B: The Project of the Stalin Works for a Koldom in Horní Litvínov], 7.
142. Tryzna, "Poznámky k soutěži Stalinových závodů" [Comments on the Stalin Works Competition], 204.
143. Ambler, "Ministerstvo techniky Odd. III/B - Projekt koldomu Stalinových závodů v Horní Litvínově" [Ministry of Technology Dept. III/B: The Project of the Stalin Works for a Koldom in Horní Litvínov], 1–11.
144. *Ibid.*, 9.
145. *Ibid.*, 9, 10.
146. *Ibid.*, 11.
147. Ministerstvo techniky to Ministerstvo financí May 9, 1947.
148. Hlinský, "Stavba kolektivního domu v Litvínově" [The Construction of the Collective House in Litvínov], 26, 27.
149. The letter was referred to in a response from the Postal Ministry. See Ministerstvo pošt [Postal Ministry] to Ministerstvo dopravy-veřejná správa technická [Ministry of Transportation–Public Technical Committee], Nov. 14, 1945, MT, carton 267, NA.
150. "Záznam o 2.schůzi II.komise / stavební pozemky / Poradního sboru pro bytovou výstavbu, konané dne 24.ledna 1946" [Record of the 2nd Meeting of Commission #2 / land / of the Advisory Board for Housing Construction on Jan. 24, 1946], Jan. 24, 1946, 1–4, MT, carton 267, NA.
151. Meeting minutes for the five committees can be found in MT, cartons 267, 302, NA. Despite state efforts, in January 1947 there were still 23,108 government employees in Bohemia, Moravia, Silesia, and Slovakia without permanent housing and another 14,393 with substandard housing. See Ministerstvo techniky, "Potřeba bytů pro státní zaměstnance," Oct. 25, 1947, MT, carton 267, NA.
152. "Záznam o II.plenární schůzi Poradního sboru pro bytovou výstavbu konané 7.května 1946" [Record of the 2nd Plenary Meeting of the Advisory Board for Housing Construction on May 7, 1946], May 7, 1946, 5–7, MT, carton 302, NA.
153. Department III/B of the new Ministry of Technology was responsible for building projects.
154. "Zápis o poradě konané podle vládního usnesení o přípravních opatřeních k provádění budovatelského programu vlády" [Minutes of the Meeting on the Preparatory Arrangements to Implement the Government's Building Program], Aug. 1, 1946, 1, MT, carton 303, NA.

155. Plans signed by Jiří Štursa on December 23, 1946, can be found in MT, carton 302, NA.
156. “Směrnice pro stavbu bytů v rámci bytové stavební obnovy a výstavby dvouletého plánu” [Directives for the Construction of Apartments in the Framework of Building Rehabilitation and Construction during the Two-Year Plan], Dec. 31, 1946, MT, carton 302, NA.
157. Karel Storch, “Mezinárodní shoda v bytovém standardu” [The International Consensus in the Housing Standard], *Architektura ČSR* 6, no. 5 (1947): 140–41.
158. *Ibid.*, 140.
159. Pilát, “Výstavba vzorných sídlišť a jejich poslání” [The Construction of the Model Housing Developments and Their Mission], 204. Extensive archival documentation about the Ostrava Model Housing Development survives. See fonds: MT, cartons 348–51, NA; Spolek pro výstavbu vzorného sídliště v Ostravě-Zábřeh [Association for the Building of the Model Housing Development in Ostrava-Zábřeh] (henceforth Spolek), Archiv města Ostravy [Ostrava Municipal Archives] (henceforth AMO), Ostrava, Czech Republic; Vládní komise pro výstavbu Ostravska [Government Commission for the Building of Ostrava] (henceforth VKVO), Zemský archiv v Opavě [Regional Archives in Opava] (henceforth ZA), Opava, Czech Republic.
160. “Zápis o poradě konané dne 26.listopad 1946” [Minutes of the Meeting on Nov. 26, 1946], Nov. 26, 1946, Spolek, carton 1, AMO.
161. Pilát, “Výstavba vzorných sídlišť a jejich poslání” [The Construction of the Model Housing Developments and Their Mission], 205.
162. *Ibid.*, 204–5. The Kladno team included Miroslav Koněrza and Emil Kovařík; Most’s team comprised Karel Kuthan, Jiří Novotný, and Ferdinand Fencel; and the Ostrava team members were Anna Friedlová, Otto Slabý, and Jaroslav Turek.
163. Jiří Štursa, “Sociálně organizační předpoklady pro plánování vzorného sídliště v Ostravě a Mostě” [The Socially Organized Conditions for the Planning of a Model Housing Development in Ostrava and Most], *Architektura ČSR* 7, no. 6–7 (1948): 207–9.
164. Records of the land purchase in Ostrava can be found in MT, carton 348, NA, and in the meeting minutes of the association in Spolek, cartons 1–20, AMO.
165. Pilát, “Výstavba vzorných sídlišť a jejich poslání” [The Construction of the Model Housing Developments and Their Mission], 205.
166. Havlíček, *Návrhy a stavby*, 70–77; Jiří Štursa, “Vzorné sídliště v Mostě” [The Model Housing Development in Most], *Architektura ČSR* 7, no. 6–7 (1948): 210–13. Havlíček would continue working on various projects at Kladno-Rozdělov until 1959.
167. Pilát, “Výstavba vzorných sídlišť a jejich poslání” [The Construction of the Model Housing Developments and Their Mission], 201–2.
168. Havlíček, *Návrhy a stavby*, 70–77; Pilát, “Výstavba vzorných sídlišť a jejich poslání” [The Construction of the Model Housing Developments and Their Mission], 201–6; Štursa, “Sociálně organizační předpoklady pro plánování vzorného sídliště v Ostravě a Mostě” [The Socially Organized Conditions for the Planning of a Model Housing Development in Ostrava and Most], 207–9; Štursa, “Vzorné sídliště v Mostě” [The Model Housing Development in Most], 210–13.
169. Štursa, “Vzorné sídliště v Mostě” [The Model Housing Development in Most], 210.
170. Pilát, “Výstavba vzorných sídlišť a jejich poslání” [The Construction of the Model Housing Developments and Their Mission], 203.
171. For discussions of the projects and their early construction phases, see MT, cartons 347–51, NA. For Ostrava projects, see Spolek, AMO.

172. In 1959, Jiří Štursa reflected on this period when he wrote a short genealogy of the development of Czechoslovak housing types, including a collective house by the Architectural Working Group. See Štursa, “Naše architektura bojující” [Our Architecture Fighting], 195–202.

173. Havlíček, *Návrhy a stavby*, 74. In plan, his original project for the United Nations competition, a three-winged conical tower, was very similar to the Kladno project. See *ibid.*, 97.

174. Havlíček, *Návrhy a stavby*, 70 (quote), 72.

175. For more on the neighborhood, see Martin Strakoš, “Nová Ostrava a její satelity - část 1” [New Ostrava and Its Satellites, Part 1], *Stavba*, no. 3 (2003): 58–63; Martin Strakoš, “Nová Ostrava a její satelity - část 2” [New Ostrava and Its Satellites, Part 2], *Stavba*, no. 4 (2003): 59–64; Martin Strakoš, *Průvodce architekturou Ostravy / Ostrava Architecture Guide* (Ostrava: Národní památkový ústav, územní odborné pracoviště v Ostravě, 2009).

176. For a full set of construction documents for these buildings, see Spolek, carton 16, AMO.

177. “Zápis o schůzi spolku pro výstavbu vzorného sídliště v Ostravě” [Minutes of the Meeting of the Association for the Construction of the Model Housing Development in Ostrava], Sept. 30, 1947, MT, carton 348, NA. Friedlová and Turek were present at that meeting to discuss their projects.

178. Pilát, “Výstavba vzorných sídlišť a jejich poslání” [The Construction of the Model Housing Developments and Their Mission], 204.

179. Updates on the Model Housing Development projects can be found in Ferdinand Balčárek and Karel Storch, “Deset let typisaze v Československu” [Ten Years of Typification in Czechoslovakia], *Architektura ČSR* 17, no. 7 (1958): 293–308; Josef Havlíček, “Z dostavby sídliště Vítězného února v Kladně” [On the Completion of the Housing Development on Victory of February Street in Kladno], *Architektura ČSR* 18, no. 4 (1959): 210–14; Hruža, “Sídliště na Mostecku” [The Housing Developments of the Most Region], 62–63.

180. The use of both languages would become standard for all official business after 1948, but it was a conciliatory move for the Union of Architects in Czechoslovakia. See “Návrh stanov Unie architektů ČSR / U.A.” [Proposal for the Bylaws of the Union of Czechoslovak Architects / U.A.], undated, ÚKPK, carton 636, NA; “Sjednocení architektů - ustavení Unie architektů ČSR” [The Unification of Architects: The Establishment of the Union of Architects in Czechoslovakia], *Architektura ČSR* 6, no. 8 (1947): 242.

181. In an undated letter to BAPS that included minutes from an association meeting, Pokorný was critical of everything about the organization, from its handling of the Town Hall competition to its unfair elections and its inability to handle the management of professional activities. See Správní výbor architektů SIA [Steering Committee of the Architectural Group of the Association of Architects and Engineers (SIA)] to BAPS, undated, ÚKPK, carton 636, NA.

182. “Návrh stanov Unie architektů ČSR/U.A.” [Proposal for the Bylaws of the Union of Czechoslovak Architects/U.A.], 1.

183. *Ibid.*, 1–8.

184. “Zápis o 5. schůzi presidia Unie architektů ČSR konané dne 10. února 1948” [Minutes of the 5th meeting of the Presidium of the UA, Feb. 10, 1948], Feb. 10, 1948, ÚKPK, carton 636, NA. The change was supported by the Architects’ Collective, the Architects’ Club, the Association of Academic Architects, and the Central Office of

Moravian-Silesian Architects. Board members of the new Union of Architects included Pokorný, Oldřich Starý of the Architects' Club, F.M. Černý of the Association of Academic Architects, Václav Roštlapil from the Central Office of Moravian-Silesian Architects, and Stanislav Semrád, who may have been a member of the Architects' Collective. See Společnost architektů [Architects' Society] to BAPS, Nov. 30, 1947, ÚKPK, carton 636, NA. Jiří Štursa was listed as absent at the February 10, 1948, meeting, although it appears that he represented the Union of Socialist Architects at the Union of Architects' meetings. During 1948, the Unie architektů was renamed the Svaz architektů; both are rendered most closely in English as the Union of Architects. *Svaz* has a Slavic root and was the term used for the other professional unions in Czechoslovakia.

185. "Zápis o 5.schůzi presidia Unie architektů ČSR konané dne 10.února 1948" [Minutes of the 5th meeting of the Presidium of the UA, Feb. 10, 1948], Feb. 10, 1948. The UIA was a postwar attempt to create a United Nations-style international body of architects. The Soviet Union and Poland were founding members of the group, along with the United States, France, and Great Britain. According to Rostislav Švácha, the UIA was founded at the 1946 London/Hastings congress in England. Jaromír Krejcar was there as a representative of BAPS and was elected to the new group's executive committee. He would later immigrate to England. Švácha, *Jaromír Krejcar, 1895–1949*, 155. Two Czech delegates attended the first UIA congress in Lausanne, Switzerland, in June 1948, and, with a few exceptions, Czechoslovakia remained active in UIA throughout the Communist period, even hosting a congress in 1967. See *L'UIA 1948–1998*, ed. Pierre Vago (Paris: Editions de l'Epure, 1998).

186. According to a February 1948 letter, it was necessary to be a full member of one of the BAPS groups to receive automatic admission into the Union of Architects; the bylaws also detailed an application process for unaffiliated architects. See BAPS to Ferdinand Mázel, Feb. 15, 1948, ÚKPK, carton 636, NA.

CHAPTER 2. TYPIFICATION AND STANDARDIZATION

Epigraph: "Opírajíc se o usnesení hosp. rady KSČ z 23.3.1949" [Based on the Decree from the Economic Committee of the Czechoslovak Communist Party], date listed as Monday after the decree, assumed to be Mar. 28, 1949, fond 996: Ministerstvo techniky [Ministry of Technology] (henceforth MT), carton 429, Národní archiv [National Archives] (henceforth NA), Prague, Czech Republic.

1. John Connelly, *Captive University: The Sovietization of East German, Czech, and Polish Higher Education, 1945–1956* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2000), 127–29.

2. Otakar Nový, "Čtvrtstoleté jubileum založení Stavoprojektu" [The Twenty-Fifth Anniversary of the Establishment of Stavoprojekt], *Architektura ČSR* 32, no. 10 (1973): 484.

3. "Prohlášení ústředního akčního výboru architektů ČSR" [Declaration of the Central Action Committee of Czechoslovak Architects], *Architektura ČSR* 7, no. 1 (1948): 42.

4. "Akčním výborům spolků architektů!" [To the Action Committees of the Associations of Architects!], Mar. 22, 1948, Ústřední kulturně propagační komise a kulturně propagační oddělení UV KSČ [Central Cultural-Propaganda Commission and the Cultural-Propaganda Department of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia] (henceforth ÚKPK), carton 636, NA. Members of the Central Action Committee in addition to Pokorný and Černý included Adolf Benš, Kamil Gross, Václav Hilský, Bohumír Holý, Miroslav Kouřil, Vilém Kuba, František Kubelka, Martin Kusý,

R. F. Podzemný, Václav Roštlapil, Jan Rott, Stanislav Semrád, Oldřich Starý, Jiří Štursa, and Jan Vaněk. Many of these men represented their associations on the UA board.

5. No list of architects “purged” in 1948 survives, although there must have been a few. Ladislav Machoň, a supporter of President Beneš, was not allowed to work as an architect in the early 1950s, but that was after the imposition of Stalinist socialist realism. Karel Teige is often mentioned in the context of the 1948 purges, since he was ostracized by the regime and others found it dangerous to associate with him after 1948. Since Teige was not eligible to join the UA or any other professional architectural association, his situation is more akin to artists, writers, musicians, and filmmakers who found themselves unwelcome after 1948. See Jiří Knapík, *Únor a kultura: sovětizace české kultury 1948–1950* [February and Culture: The Sovietization of Czech Culture] (Prague: Libri, 2004).

6. Rostislav Švách, *Jaromír Krejcar, 1895–1949* (Prague: Jaroslav Fragner Gallery, 1995), 149–56. Švách writes that Krejcar’s position did not seem threatened at the time, although he had been a critic of Stalinism in the 1930s. He had some personal circumstances that may have contributed to his decision to leave, including an offer to teach in London that came through his UIA contacts, a pending lawsuit over unpaid child support, and his Jewish wife’s concerns for her safety, which led her to spend most of her time in Israel before he emigrated.

7. “Prohlášení akčního výboru architektů ČSR o nové organizaci architektonické práce” [Proclamation of the Action Committee of Czechoslovak Architects on the New Organization of Architectural Work], Apr. 7, 1948, ÚKPK, carton 636, NA.

8. “Situační zpráva o organizaci Architektonických atelierů” [Working Report on the Organization of the Architectural Ateliers], undated, 4, MT, carton 431, NA. The text (p. 10) of this document suggests that it was written in the summer of 1948 because it refers to activities that will happen in fall 1948.

9. For a chronology of this period in the Eastern Bloc, see Mark Pittaway, *Eastern Europe 1939–2000* (London: Arnold, 2004); Joseph Rothschild, *Return to Diversity: A Political History of East Central Europe since World War II* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989), 76–123. For an example of the emphasis on discontinuity, see Knapík, *Únor a kultura*. There has also been interest in the run-up to 1948, but few works deal with the period beyond 1948. See, for example, Bradley F. Abrams, *The Struggle for the Soul of the Nation: Czech Culture and the Rise of Communism* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2004); and Martin R. Myant, *Socialism and Democracy in Czechoslovakia, 1945–1948* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981).

10. The best of these accounts include Hans Renner, *A History of Czechoslovakia since 1945* (London: Routledge, 1989); Rothschild, *Return to Diversity*; and Edward Taborsky, *Communism in Czechoslovakia, 1948–1960* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1961).

11. Many aspects of Stavoprojekt’s operations remain unclear because very little documentation from the offices is available in archives. The Stavoprojekt-Prague collection at the National Archives includes 113 meters of materials for 1948–1953. The collection is not catalogued or organized and therefore remains inaccessible.

12. “Prohlášení akčního výboru architektů ČSR o nové organizaci architektonické práce” [Proclamation of the Action Committee of Czechoslovak Architects on the New Organization of Architectural Work], Apr. 7, 1948, ÚKPK, carton 636, NA; “Situační zpráva o organizaci Architektonických atelierů” [Working Report on the Organization of the Architectural Ateliers], 4.

13. Karel Janů, Jiří Štursa, and Jiří Voženílek, “Is Scientific Synthesis Possible in

Architecture?" in *Forma sleduje vědu / Form Follows Science*, ed. Rostislav Švácha, Sona Ryndová, and Pavla Pokorná (Prague: Jaroslav Fragner Gallery, 2000), 258.

14. "Úvod" [Introduction], 4n5, fond: Ministerstvo stavebnictví - ústřední likvidační správa [Ministry of Building, Central Liquidation Committee] (henceforth MS-ÚLS), finding aid, NA. The first wave of nationalization affected only three large building concerns: Konstruktiva, a construction company in Prague; Obnova, a building restoration firm in Slovakia; and the Baťa Company in Zlín, which in addition to its shoe-making business, manufactured building materials and ran an in-house architecture and engineering office.

15. Otakar Nový, deputy director of Stavoprojekt and head of the architecture ateliers, took credit for naming Stavoprojekt. In 1973 he wrote that "for a long time [the new organization] lacked a name. In August 1948, I thought up a name for it in telegraph shorthand. Eventually the organization was christened as Stavoprojekt. This survived for 25 years and in the end became the model for analogous labels for a whole succession of similar organizations in other socialist countries." Nový, "Čtvrtstoleté jubileum založení Stavoprojektu" [The Twenty-Fifth Anniversary of the Establishment of Stavoprojekt], 486. Nový does not mention, however, that names of this sort were common in the Soviet Union in the 1930s. For example, the Moscow Administration for Civil Housing Projects and Communal Construction took the name "Mosproekt" in 1933. Patricia Kennedy Grimsted, ed., *Archives of Russia*, vol. 1 (Armonk, NY: London: M. E. Sharpe, 2000), 388. Other municipal architecture offices used similar names, such as Lenproekt in Leningrad and Kievproekt in Kiev.

16. "Organizační schema závodu: Stavoprojekt PA-100" [Organizational Scheme of the Company: Stavoprojekt PA-100]; "Zápis I.celostátní porady vedoucích všech oddělení Stavoprojektu" [Minutes of the First Nationwide Conference of the Heads of All Stavoprojekt Departments], speech by Otakar Nový, Jan. 7–8, 1949, 24, both in MT, carton 431, NA. Some of the large enterprises that had been nationalized in 1946, such as the Czechoslovak Mining Company [Československé doly] also employed architects; two representatives from the company attended a Stavoprojekt directors' meeting on January 7, 1949. Some businesses were also able to remain independent into 1950. For example, an architect from Ostrava complained at the nationwide January 1949 conference that their Stavoprojekt office was so understaffed that the national enterprises in the city were hiring a private civil engineering firm to do the work that could not be completed in the design atelier. "Stručný záznam diskuse porady dne 7.I.1949" [Brief Summary of the Discussion at the Executive Meeting on Jan. 7, 1949], 33, MT, carton 431, NA. Comments about "private builders" [*soukromníci*] persist in the archival materials through 1950.

17. Nový, "Čtvrtstoleté jubileum založení Stavoprojektu" [The Twenty-Fifth Anniversary of the Establishment of Stavoprojekt], 488.

18. "Zápis I.celostátní porady vedoucích všech oddělení Stavoprojektu," speech by Otakar Nový, 24.

19. When the Ministry of Technology was disbanded on December 12, 1950, administration of Stavoprojekt was transferred to the new Ministry of Building Industry [Ministerstvo stavebního průmyslu]. This ministry existed from December 12, 1950, to January 31, 1953. Its name was then changed to the Ministry of Building [Ministerstvo stavebnictví], which survived until July 10, 1960. Despite various names and administrative structures, all three were led by Emanuel Šlechta until June 15, 1956. The name Stavoprojekt was used until January 1, 1954, when the architectural ateliers were renamed "state design institutes" [*státní projektové ústavy*] and a head office for the

institutes was established within the Ministry of Local Enterprise [Ministerstvo místního hospodářství, or MMH]. On January 1, 1956, a new organization called the Central Administration for Residential and Civic Building [Ústřední správa pro bytovou a občanskou výstavbu, or ÚSBOV] was created and all architectural administration was housed within it, but the offices were still called “state design institutes.” The Central Administration for Residential and Civic Building was disbanded in March 1958, and the design institutes were then placed under the control of the State Committee for Construction [Státní výbor pro výstavbu, or SVV], itself dissolved in late 1960. At an undetermined point between 1963 and 1968, the administrative body of the state design institutes took back the name Stavoprojekt, while remaining under the control of the Ministry of Building, and the offices became Stavoprojekt Prague, Stavoprojekt Brno, and so forth. “Úvod” [Introduction], fond 1185: Ústřední správa pro bytovou a občanskou výstavbu [Central Administration for Residential and Civic Building] (henceforth ÚSBOV), finding aid - inventory no. 1223, NA; Nový, “Čtvrtstoleté jubileum založení Stavoprojektu” [The Twenty-Fifth Anniversary of the Establishment of Stavoprojekt].

20. *Stavebnictví včera, dnes a zítra* [The Building Industry, Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow] (Prague: Stavební informační středisko, 1973), 18.

21. “Úvod” [Introduction], 6–7, 8, MS-ÚLS, finding aid, NA.

22. For example, in Ostrava the commission sought out a Slovak company called Drevina that could provide prefabricated wooden houses to use as dormitories. See correspondence about Drevina, Jan.–June 1950, fond: Vládní komise pro výstavbu Ostravska [Government Commission for the Construction of the Ostrava Region] (henceforth VKVO), folder 70, carton 7, Zemský archiv v Opavě [Regional Archives in Opava] (henceforth ZA), Opava, Czech Republic. The Ministry of Technology looked to a company in Prague called Delta to design small wooden houses for workers in Kladno. See correspondence with Delta, Dec. 1948–Oct. 1949, MT, carton 430, NA. These projects in Ostrava and Kladno were never built because of the introduction of Stavoprojekt’s standardized housing types in May 1949. Information on additional examples of independent companies with building products to sell are found in MT, carton 430, NA.

23. János Kornai, *The Socialist System: The Political Economy of Communism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992).

24. “Úvod” [Introduction], 4n5, MS-ÚLS, finding aid, NA.

25. The Ostrava-Karviná Regional Coal Mines functioned as a consortium, its individual entities including thirty-two mines, nine coking plants, ten mining power stations, two steel plants, and other small enterprises.

26. “Prováděcí plan stavebních investic pro stavby bytové na rok 1950” [The Building Investors’ Execution Plan for Residential Building in 1950], Feb. 16, 1950, VKVO, folder 107.2, carton 7, ZA.

27. “Záznam o poradě, konané na plánovacím referátě KNV dne 1.března 1950 ve věci bytové výstavby na rok 1950” [Record of the executive meeting at the planning office of the Regional National Committee on March 1, 1950, concerning residential building in 1950], Mar. 1, 1950, VKVO, folder 107.2, carton 7, ZA.

28. See KPSS, TsK, *History of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (Bolsheviks): Short Course* (New York: International Publishers, 1939), 119–20.

29. On stipends for artists, see Tereza Petišková, “Oficiální umění padesátých let” [Official Art of the 1950s], in *Dějiny českého výtvarného umění V. (1939–1958)* [Histories of Czech Creative Arts, vol. 5], ed. Rostislav Švácha and Marie Platovská (Prague: Academia, 2005), 346.

30. Nový, “Čtvrtstoleté jubileum založení Stavoprojektu” [The Twenty-Fifth Anniversary of the Establishment of Stavoprojekt], 488. When Nový wrote that the design institutes were “not forced on anyone,” he was reiterating an argument that he made in 1949 and that many architects would have disagreed with then and even more so in 1973. See Otakar Nový, “Nová organisace projekční práce” [The New Organization of Design Work], *Architektura ČSR* 8, no. 1 (1949): 53–56. In this article, he scolds architects who were protesting the changes and asks, “Why would they come out in opposition to Stavoprojekt, when architects called for and demonstrated for so many years and so often in support of collective work, cooperation with specialists, for a scientific basis...?” Ibid., 55.

31. Marie Benešová, “Socialistický realismus v architektuře padesátých let” [Socialist Realism in the Architecture of the 1950s], in *Poválečná totalitní architektura a otázky její památkové ochrany: sborník příspěvků* [Postwar Totalitarian Architecture and Questions of Its Preservation: Conference Proceedings], ed. Nadia Goryczková and Martina Vymětalová (Ostrava: Státní památkový ústav v Ostravě, 2002), 38.

32. “Návrh veřejného prohlášení” [Proposal for a Public Proclamation], undated, 1948, 2, ÚPKP, carton 636, NA.

33. The fate of the Architectural Council after 1951 is unclear. Lack of further references to it in archival materials suggests that the new executive board replaced the council as an advisory body. On Kroha’s participation, see “Stručná životopisná data” [Brief Biographical Data], undated but after 1972, fond: Jiří Kroha, loose papers, Muzeum města Brna [Museum of the City of Brno], Brno, Czech Republic.

34. “Stavoprojekt, směrnice č. 1,” Sept. 1948, 2, MT, carton 431, NA. The Stavoprojekt bylaws state that the head office of the Czechoslovak Building Works had the power to name the director of Stavoprojekt.

35. Benešová, “Socialistický realismus v architektuře padesátých let” [Socialist Realism in the Architecture of the 1950s], 38.

36. “Kandidátka výboru Svazu architektů – Voženílek” [Candidate for the Board of the Architects’ Union: Voženílek], Mar. 22, 1953, ÚPKP, carton 637, NA.

37. References to a “housing emergency” were frequent in the early years, especially with respect to housing around Ostrava, where the government’s planned industrial expansion was being held up by a severe shortage of housing for workers, both single journeymen and those workers who wanted to bring their families. See, for example, “Zřizování malých domků pro zmírnění bytové nouze” [Setting up Small Houses to Mitigate the Housing Emergency], Mar. 8, 1949, MT, carton 429, NA.

38. *Základy první československé pětiletky* [The Fundamentals of the First Czechoslovak Five-Year Plan] (Prague: Ministerstvo informací a osvěty, 1948), 121. The total building budget was 176.9 billion crowns, with 39.3 billion for housing units.

39. Alice Teichova, *The Czechoslovak Economy, 1918–1980* (London: Routledge, 1988), 121.

40. “Bytová 2LP k 1.březnu 1948: Tabulky” [Two-Year Plan Housing to March 1, 1948: Tables], Mar. 2, 1948, 1, MT, carton 347, NA. According to these tables from the State Planning Office, the total number of new and reconstructed housing units to that point should have been 61,000 (roughly half of the 125,000 that had been announced in July 1946). Only 12,000 were completed, 7,900 of them in Slovakia, where building materials, such as wood for small rural cottages, were not as scarce. Another 42,100 units were being built but were not yet habitable.

41. “Memorandum Bloku architektonických pokrokových spolků o nutnosti organ-

isace práce v oboru architektury, plánování a stavebnictví” [Statement of the Block of Progressive Architectural Organizations about the necessity of organizing work in the fields of architecture, planning and construction], Nov. 22, 1945, ÚKPK, carton 636, NA.

42. “Zápis I.celostátní porady vedoucích všech oddělení Stavoprojektu” [Minutes of the First Nationwide Conference of the Heads of All Stavoprojekt Departments], speech by Karel Janů, Jan. 7–8, 1949, 1, MT, carton 431, NA. The speakers included Janů, Kroha, Nový, and Voženílek, as well as Erich Kohn, director of the Stavoprojekt Research Center; [Comrade] Pánek, deputy secretary for building from the Central Committee of the Czechoslovak Communist Party; Emanuel Šlecht, minister of technology; and Karel Storch, director of the Institute for Standardization and Typification..

43. “Zápis I.celostátní porady vedoucích všech oddělení Stavoprojektu” [Minutes of the First Nationwide Conference of the Heads of All Stavoprojekt Departments], speech by Karel Janů, Jan. 7–8, 1949, 1.

44. The phrase “building socialism,” with its architectural connotation, was one of the Communist Party’s favorite slogans.

45. “Stavoprojekt, směrnice č. 1,” Sept. 1948, 2, MT, carton 431, NA; “Zápis I.celostátní porady vedoucích všech oddělení Stavoprojektu” [Minutes of the First Nationwide Conference of the Heads of All Stavoprojekt Departments], 27, speech by Otakar Nový, MT, carton 431, NA.

46. “Zápis I.celostátní porady vedoucích všech oddělení Stavoprojektu” [Minutes of the First Nationwide Conference of the Heads of All Stavoprojekt Departments], 18, speech by Jiří Voženílek.

47. Ibid., 25, speech by Otakar Nový.

48. Ibid., 7, speech by [Comrade] Pánek. The Slanský he mentions is the same general secretary of the Communist Party who would be tried, convicted, and executed for treason in 1952.

49. The relevant successive issues of *Architektura ČSR*, volume 8, are no. 3–4 (1949): 65–128; no. 5–6 (1949): 129–84; no. 7–8 (1949): 185–240; no. 9–10 (1949): 241–324; and no. 11–12 (1949): 325–58.

50. Stakhanovism was named for Stakhanov, a Soviet miner named who was said to have out-produced his comrades in the mines by a factor of five. Starting in the early 1950s, competitions, often staged or falsified, showcased the impossible feats of workers as their production levels far exceeded professional norms. These workers, usually well connected to local party bosses who would help rig the competitions, were rewarded with perks such as preferential housing assignments, large bonuses, and access to restricted goods. Architects’ participation in these competitions is known from illustrations in *Architektura ČSR* and from statements like that of a Brno architect who reported at an executive meeting that “the atelier already put up three shockworkers in socialist competitions.” “Stručný záznam diskuse porady dne 7.1.1949” [Brief Summary of the Discussion at the Executive Meeting on Jan. 7, 1949], 31, MT, carton 431, NA.

51. *Architektura ČSR* 8, no. 1–2 (1949): 3.

52. These articles in *Architektura ČSR* 8, no. 1–2 (1949) included Karel Janů, “Nová úloha stavebnictví” [New Work of the Building Industry], 4–5; Jiří Kroha, “Nová cesta československé architektury” [The New Path of Czechoslovak Architecture], 6–7; and Jiří Voženílek, “Poznámky k otázce modulace” [Comments on the Question of Modularization], 16.

53. Erich Kohn, Karel Storch, and Miloslav Wimmer, “Výrobní a technické prostředky” [Productive and Technical Means], *Architektura ČSR* 8, no. 1–2 (1949): 12–47.

54. Ibid., 12–13, 14 (first quote), 20 (second quote).

55. Ibid., 22–25, 26–27 (quote).

56. Ibid., 28 (first quote), 29 (second quote).

57. Ibid., 30–31.

58. Interest in machines came in many architectural forms, from the steel constructions of the Russian constructivists to the “moderne” of American art deco and the famous Le Corbusier statement that “a house is a machine for living in.” In the interwar period, Czech and Slovak functionalists were part of an international network of local avant-garde groups working in a style derived partly from the Russians and influenced substantially by the work of Le Corbusier in France. In the postwar period, a critique of the perceived interwar interest in style over function was one of the underpinnings of the Marxist-Leninist attacks on “bourgeois” interwar architecture. See Rostislav Švácha, Sona Ryndová, and Pavla Pokorná, eds., *Forma sleduje vědu / Form Follows Science* (Prague: Jaroslav Fragner Gallery, 2000); Karel Teige, *Modern Architecture in Czechoslovakia and Other Writings*, trans. Irena Žantovská Murray and David Britt (Los Angeles: Getty Research Institute, 2000). Jean-Louis Cohen’s introduction to the Teige book is particularly useful.

59. Kohn, Storch, and Wimmer, “Výrobní a technické prostředky” [Productive and Technical Means], 12.

60. Ibid., 13.

61. Ibid., 12.

62. Ibid., 13.

63. Ibid.

64. Ibid., 19. See Tetsuro Yoshida, *Das Japanische Wohnhaus* [The Japanese Residence] (Berlin: Verlag Ernst Wasmuth, 1935), 53, 146. The book was revised and printed in English in 1955, although only the diagrams appear in the translation. See Tetsuro Yoshida, *The Japanese House and Garden*, trans. Marcus G. Sims (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1955). Thanks to Ken Tadashi Oshima for suggesting this source.

65. Kohn, Storch, and Wimmer, “Výrobní a technické prostředky” [Productive and Technical Means], 13 (quote), 15.

66. Voženílek, “Poznámky k otázce modulace” [Comments on the Question of Modularization], 16.

67. Ibid. To ensure strong walls, brick courses are staggered. Each brick overlaps with one-half of the two bricks in the course below. This places the mortar seam in the center of the brick and makes the half-brick, or fifteen centimeters, the natural dimension. Voženílek pointed out that with a module of ten centimeters, it would be possible to waste large amounts of brick if one-third or two-thirds of a brick were needed to finish corners or line window openings.

68. “Návrh veřejného prohlášení” [Proposal for a Public Proclamation], Apr. 7, 1948, 2, ÚKPK, carton 636, NA.

69. For more on Zlín, see *Zlín - město v zahradách / Zlín: City in Gardens* (Zlín: Statutární město Zlín, 2005); Vladimír Šlapeta, *Baťa: architektura a urbanismus, 1910–1950* [Baťa: Architecture and Urbanism] (Zlín: Statní galerie ve Zlíně, 1991). See also Kimberly Elman [Zarecor], “Garden Cities and Company Towns: Tomáš Baťa and the Formation of Zlín, Czechoslovakia,” *Harriman Review* 12, no. 4 (2000): 25–35.

70. Jean-Louis Cohen, “Zlín: An Industrial Republic,” *Rassegna* 19, no. 70 (1997): 42.

71. For more on his career, see F. L. Gahura, L. Hornáková, and J. Gahura, *Frantisek Lýdie Gahura, 1891–1958: projekty, realizace a socharské dílo* [Frantisek Lýdie Gahura,

1891–1958: Projects, Buildings and Sculptures] (Zlín: Krajská galerie výtvarného umění; Brno: Muzeum města Brna, 2006).

72. Elman [Zarecor], “Garden Cities and Company Towns,” 33.

73. Quoted in Šlapeta, *Baťa*, 105.

74. See Tomáš Baťa, *Knowledge in Action: The Bata System of Management*, trans. Otilia M. Kablesova (Amsterdam: IOS Press, 1992).

75. For a description of how the Baťa system operated in 1930, see Paul Devinat, “Working Conditions in a Rationalised Undertaking,” parts I and II, *International Labor Review*, nos. 1, 2 (1930): 45–69 and 163–86, respectively. See also Cohen, “Zlín,” 42.

76. “Kandidátka výboru Svazu architektů – Voženílek” [Candidate for the Board of the Architects’ Union: Voženílek], Mar. 22, 1953. Despite his background, Voženílek wanted to move beyond the Baťa model of an umbrella organization with autonomous units. By 1953, he “strongly defended the position that this organization should be, as it was stipulated during its founding, freed from its union with the Czechoslovak Building Works.”

77. “Dopis: 20.5.48 od Baťa, Zlín do Ministerstvo Techniky” [Letter: May 20, 1948, from Baťa, Zlín, to the Ministry of Technology], MT, carton 429, NA.

78. Nový, “Čtvrtstoleté jubileum založení Stavoprojektu” [The Twenty-Fifth Anniversary of the Establishment of Stavoprojekt], 486. Nový wrote that the office opened on April 5, 1948.

79. Karel Pilát, “Výstavba vzorných sídlišť a jejich poslání” [The Construction of the Model Housing Developments and Their Mission], *Architektura ČSR* 7, no. 6–7 (1948): 202. In 1951, Jiří Kroha was brought in to redesign the master plan and the town center.

80. In Kladno, twenty fifteen-unit buildings were started during the Two-Year Plan; the neighborhood was finally finished in the 1960s. The number of buildings started in Most is not clear, but construction continued through the 1950s. See Josef Havlíček, *Návrhy a stavby* [Projects and Buildings] (Prague: Státní nakladatelství technické literatury, 1964), 70–77; Jiří Hruža, “Sídliště na Mostecku” [The Housing Developments of the Most Region], *Architektura ČSR* 17, no. 2 (1958): 62–63. In Ostrava, the civic center was never completed. In the 1980s, a small restaurant and office building were built instead of the hotel originally planned for the site.

81. The problem was widespread enough that the State Planning Office sent memos to the Ministry of Technology in late 1949 reminding staff that the law required all new construction to be done using types. See, for example, “Přípomínky k návrhu vyhlášky o typech bytových staveb” [Remarks on the Proposed Notice about Types of Residential Buildings], Sept. 9, 1949, MT, carton 429, NA.

82. Ministerstvo práce a sociální péče [Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs], memo to Spolky pro výstavbu vzorných sídlišť [Association for the Building of the Model Housing Development], Sept. 23, 1949, fond: Spolek pro výstavbu vzorného sídliště v Ostravě-Zábřeh [Association for the Building of the Model Housing Development in Ostrava-Zábřeh], carton 6, Archiv města Ostravy [Ostrava Municipal Archives], Ostrava, Czech Republic.

83. “Zápis 13.schůze výboru Spolku pro výstavbu vzorného sídliště, konané dne 22.prosince 1949” [Minutes of the 13th committee meeting of the Association for the Construction of the Model Housing Settlement, Dec. 22, 1949], 1 (first quote), 2 (second and third quotes), 3 (fourth quote), MT, carton 350, NA.

84. See, for example, “Výstavba vzorného sídliště – informace o provádění nátěrů” [The Construction of the Model Housing Development: Information on Painting], May

19, 1948, MT, carton 351, NA. In this letter, representatives from the building association wrote to the Ministry of Technology to say that they could get only white paint, which was not proposed for the residential interiors. They angrily stated that the name “model” for these settlements was inappropriate.

85. See, for example, “Výstavby vzorného sídliště – provádění jeho výstavby” [The Construction of the Model Housing Developments: Executing the Construction], Aug. 31, 1949, MT, carton 351, NA.

86. “Zápis o schůzi představenstva Spolku pro výstavbu vzorného sídliště v Ostravě konané dne 23.srpna 1950” [Minutes of the Meeting of the Board of Directors of the Association for the Construction of the Model Housing Settlement in Ostrava, Aug. 23, 1950], MT, carton 351, NA.

87. “Záznam o pracovní poradě ve věci možnosti redukce stavebního programu bytů” [Record of the Working Committee Considering the Possibility of Reducing the Construction Program for Housing Units], July 21, 1948, 1, MT, carton 431, NA. A “working kitchen” [*pracovní kuchyně*] was a smaller, but fully equipped kitchen without a seating area. It is distinguished from an “eat-in kitchen” [*obytné kuchyně*] and a “kitchen nook” [*kuchyňský kout*], similar to a kitchenette.

88. “Zápis o poradě redakčního komitétu sborníku ‘Bydlení’” [Meeting Minutes of the Editorial Committee for the Guide, “Living”], Nov. 18, 1948, 4, suggestions from architect Wein, MT, carton 268, NA.

89. Kohn, Storch, and Wimmer, “Výrobní a technické prostředky” [Productive and Technical Means], 46.

90. Ibid.

91. “Pětiletý plan – zpráva o možnosti redukce stavebního programu bytů” [The Five-Year Plan: Report on the Possibility of Reducing the Construction Program for Housing Units], July 22, 1948, 1, MT, carton 431, NA.

92. Ibid., 1–3.

93. “Stav prací na projektech typ. obytných domů k 30.6.48” [The Status of Work on Projects for Typification of Dwelling Units up to June 30, 1948], June 30, 1948, MT, carton 431, NA. The list in this status report shows four apartment building types and two family houses under consideration at the Baťa office in Prague. There was also research on prefabricated family houses being done at the Baťa Building Department in Zlín.

94. V. Dorazil, “Kolektivní bydlení či rodinný domek?” [Collective Living or the Single-Family House], undated, sent to the ministries Sept. 10, 1948, 1–21, MT, carton 431, NA. The report was written by the “population group” within the Commission for the National Budget and the Needs of the General Secretariat of Economic Councils at the Office of the Prime Minister [Populační skupina při komisi pro národní rozpočet a spotřebu generální sekretariát hospodářské rady při úřadu předsednictva vlády]. It was submitted to the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs’ Working Group for Residential Building and the Ministry of Technology.

95. Ibid., 8.

96. Ibid., 8–9.

97. Ibid., 17, 18, 20.

98. Ministerstvo techniky to Generální sekretariát hospodářské rady [General Secretariat of the Economic Council], Sept. 17, 1948, MT, carton 431, NA.

99. “Zpráva o některých otázkách bytové výstavby v r. 1951” [Report on Some Questions about Residential Building in 1951], Nov. 27, 1950, 7, MT, carton 429, NA.

100. Stavoprojekt to Ministerstvo techniky, Dec. 17, 1948, MT, carton 429, NA. The

types, the determination of which was the final step before the T-series was proposed, were called no. 1, no. 5, and no. 30 (two apartment buildings and a fourplex, respectively). The area for each unit was approximately the same as what would be proposed for the T-series: 70 square meters (750 square feet) for no. 1, 77 square meters (830 square feet) for no. 5, and 52 (560 square feet) for the units in the fourplex (no. 30).

101. Plans to illustrate the no. 1, no. 5, and no. 30 types did not survive with the Dec. 17, 1948, letter from Stavoprojekt to the Ministry of Technology. Given that the prototypes built in Prague-Prosek were T1 and T5, it is possible that no. 1 and no. 5 were the same designs and that the T32 fourplex was a further iteration of the no. 30.

102. Kohn, Storch, and Wimmer, "Výrobní a technické prostředky" [Productive and Technical Means], 42–45.

103. "Typové plány obytných staveb s malými byty pro rok 1950. Vypracování" [Type Plans for Residential Building with Small Apartments for 1950. In Progress], May 19, 1949, 1, MT, carton 429, NA.

104. "Služební oznámení: typové plány staveb bytových pro rok 1950" [Official Announcement: Type Plans for Residential Buildings for 1950], Sept. 10, 1949, 3, MT, carton 429, NA.

105. "Zpráva o některých nedostacích typizačních prací pro bytové stavby a návrh na opatření" [Report on Some of the Deficiencies of the Work on Typification for Residential Buildings and a Proposal for Remedies], Nov. 2, 1950, 1, MT, carton 429, NA. Of 5,124 units built in Slovakia in 1950, 2,443 (48 percent) were T40 houses, 1,730 (33.5 percent) T12 apartments, and 952 (18.5 percent) were T42 duplex units. In 1951, the breakdown was 3 percent T11 units, 77 percent T12 units, and 20 percent T42 units, showing the strong shift in favor of apartments over single-family houses.

106. "Typové plány obytných staveb s malými byty pro rok 1950. Vypracování" [Type Plans for Residential Building with Small Apartments for 1950. In Progress], 1.

107. "Zpráva o některých nedostacích typizačních prací pro bytové stavby a návrh na opatření" [Report on Some of the Deficiencies of the Work on Typification for Residential Buildings and a Proposal for Remedies], 1.

108. "Typové plány obytných staveb s malými byty pro rok 1950. Vypracování" [Type Plans for Residential Building with Small Apartments for 1950. In Progress], 1.

109. "Služební oznámení: typové plány staveb bytových pro rok 1950" [Official Announcement: Type Plans for Residential Buildings for 1950], 6, 8. Each bay [*trakt*] was 13.78 feet or 4.2 meters deep.

110. "Po jednání s odborem 8. Věc: bytová výstavba" [From the Meeting with Department 8 Concerning Residential Building], Sept. 6, 1949, MT, carton 429, NA.

111. "Dnešní stav, který musíme zlepšit: dědictví kapitalismu" [Today's Situation, Which We Must Improve: The Legacy of Capitalism], *Architektura ČSR* 8, no. 1–2 (1949): 10.

112. *Ostravsko včera a dnes: sborník statí a dokumentů* [The Ostrava Region Yesterday and Today: A Collection of Essays and Documents] (Ostrava: Krajský národní výbor v Ostravě, 1954), photograph section, unpagged.

113. "Postavíme města socialismu" [We are Building the Cities of Socialism], undated (after Jan. 2, 1952), A3, Úřad předsednictva vlády - vládní výbor pro výstavbu [Office of the Prime Minister - Government Committee for Construction], carton 126, NA. Also quoted in Strakoš, "Nová Ostrava a její satelity - část 2" [New Ostrava and Its Satellites, Part 2], 62.

114. "Zpráva o některých nedostacích typizačních prací pro bytové stavby a návrh na opatření" [Report on Some of the Deficiencies of the Work on Typification for Hous-

ing Production and a Proposal for Remedies], Nov. 2, 1950, 6, MT, carton 429, NA. Based on the number of total new units, the types were used as follows. Apartments: T11 = 3 rooms + kitchen + bath (0.3 percent), T12 = 2 rooms + kitchen + bath (27.3 percent), T20 = 1 room + kitchen + bath (9.6 percent), T60 = 2 rooms + kitchen + bath in seven-story tower (0 percent). Houses: T42 = 2 room + kitchen + bath (6.3 percent), T40 = 1 room + kitchen + bath (48.5 percent), T51 = 3 rooms + kitchen + bath in a row house (0 percent).

115. “Přípomínky k návrhu vyhlášky o typech bytových staveb” [Remarks on the Proposal Announcing Types for Residential Buildings].”

116. See Jiří Voženílek, “Typisace a stavitelství” [Typification and the Building Industry], *Architektura ČSR* 11, no. 7–9 (1952): 270.

117. Thomas P. Whitney, ed., *Khrushchev Speaks: Selected Speeches, Articles, and Press Conferences, 1949–1961* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1963), 165.

118. The only known copy of any guide is for industrial buildings and is at the National Library in Prague: *Typisací sborník 1952* [Typification Guide 1952], 12 vols. (Prague: Průmyslové vydavatelství, 1951–1952).

119. “Státní ceny za architekturu a stavebnictví” [State Prizes for Architecture and Construction], *Architektura ČSR* 10, no. 2 (1951): 65.

CHAPTER 3: NATIONAL IN FORM, SOCIALIST IN CONTENT

Epigraph: Karel Honzík, “Škola socialistického realismu” [The School of Socialist Realism], *Architektura ČSR* 7, no. 9 (1948): 298. The article first appeared in *Kulturní politika* 3, no. 35 (May 21, 1948).

1. Havlíček was appointed head of the Prague office of Stavoprojekt at its inception in 1948. Josef Pechar, *Československá architektura, 1945–1977* [Czechoslovak Architecture] (Prague: Odeon, 1979), 21n70.

2. For the pomade or shoe polish story, see Jindřich Vybíral, “The Beacons of Revolutionary Ideas: Sorela as Historicism and Rhetoric,” *Centropa* 1, no. 2 (2001): 95. On Lakomý, see Matúš Dulla and Henrieta Moravčíková, *Architektúra Slovenska v 20. storočí* [20th-Century Architecture in Slovakia] (Bratislava: Slovart, 2002), 178n44. See also Martin Strakoš’s epilogue in Jindřich Vybíral, *Zrození velkoměsta architektura v obraze Moravské Ostravy 1890–1938* [The Birth of a Great City: Architecture in Pictures of Moravian Ostrava 1890–1938], 3rd ed. (Šlapanice: ERA; Ostrava: Národní památkový ústav, územní odborné pracoviště v Ostravě, 2003), 196. A poster advertising the pomade or shoe polish brand is in the collection of the Museum of Decorative Arts in Prague [Uměleckoprůmyslové muzeum].

3. See Zdeněk Lakomý, “Úkoly výzkumného ústavu pro stavebnictví a architekturu ve vztahu k architektonické tvorbě” [The Work of the Research Institute for Building and Architecture in Relation to Architectural Production], *Architektura ČSR* 10, no. 7–9 (1951): 285–87. Other texts by Lakomý can be found in *Architektura ČSR* from 1951 to 1953. In a 2008 interview, Pavel Halík recalled working for Lakomý in an architectural theory institute in the 1960s, when he was “a loyal party functionary.” He also noted that Lakomý worked for Bafa during the war. See Michal Janata, “Chodit vertikálně po horizontální zemi” [Walking Vertically across a Horizontal Country], *Architektura-Stavebnictví-Byznys*, Feb. 12, 2008, <http://www.asb-portal.cz/profil/osobnost/chodit-vertikaln-po-horizontalni-zemi-178.html> (accessed May 12, 2010).

4. Text of Sedlecký’s conference talk in *Sorela: tvář města Havířova; sborník ke konferenci, říjen 2007, kulturní dům Radost* [Sorela: The Face of the City of Havířov; Conference Proceedings, October 2007, Radost House of Culture] (Havířov: Městské kulturní

středisko ve spolupráci s Ústavem památkové péče Ostrava, 2007), 16. The term *Sorela* is used in this chapter to reference the architectural variant of Czechoslovak socialist realism. The term *socialist realism* will be used to indicate the Soviet style or to refer to the theoretical underpinnings of the method as transmitted from the Soviet Union to Czechoslovakia.

5. Architectural historian Anders Åman has written that Jiří Kroha underwent an “about-face . . . too fantastic, too demonstrative . . . to take seriously” (original emphasis). Anders Åman, *Architecture and Ideology in Eastern Europe during the Stalin Era* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1992), 169. Pavel Halík writes that some members of the former avant-garde were forced to confess sins of the interwar period, but he suggests that these architects allowed themselves to be manipulated. See Pavel Halík, “Ideologická architektura” [Ideological Architecture], *Umění* 44, no. 5 (1996): 438–60.

6. See “Kandidátka výboru Svazu architektů” [Candidate for the Board of the Architects’ Union], Mar. 22, 1953, Voženílek, fond 1261/2/20: Ústřední kulturně propagační komise a kulturně propagační oddělení UV KSČ [Central Cultural-Propaganda Commission and the Cultural-Propaganda Department of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia] (henceforth ÚPKP), carton 637, Národní archiv [National Archives] (henceforth NA), Prague, Czech Republic. In 1953, the Central Committee of the Communist Party established a secret committee to address issues related to the building industry and its failure to meet its target outputs and budgets. Called the “Government Committee for Construction” [Vládní výbor pro výstavbu], this committee became the official State Committee on Construction [Státní výbor pro výstavbu] in 1956. See fond 315: Úřad předsednictva vlády - vládní výbor pro výstavbu [Office of the Prime Minister-Government Committee for Construction] (henceforth VVV), NA; and fond 976: Státní výbor pro výstavbu (henceforth SVV), NA. The membership of the committee is not clear from the archival documentation, although Voženílek’s name appears in notes on the minutes from the eighth meeting, in December 1953.

7. See, for example, Heda Margolius Kovály, *Under a Cruel Star: A Life in Prague, 1941–1968* (New York: Penguin Books, 1989), and Zuzana Justman’s documentary film about the show trials, *A Trial in Prague* (USA/Czech Republic: Cinema Guild, 2000).

8. Vladimír Meduna, “Nová Ostrava” [New Ostrava], *Architektura ČSR* 10, no. 7–9 (1951): 262.

9. See Åman, *Architecture and Ideology in Eastern Europe during the Stalin Era*; Halík, “Ideologická architektura” [Ideological Architecture]; Pavel Halík, “Padesáta léta” [The 1950s], in *Dějiny českého výtvarného umění V., 1939–1958* [Histories of Czech Creative Arts, vol. 5], ed. Rostislav Švácha and Marie Platovská (Prague: Academia, 2005); Tereza Petišková, *Československý socialistický realismus 1948–1958* [Czechoslovak Socialist Realism] (Prague: Gallery Rudolfinum, 2002).

10. Radomíra Sedláková, *Sorela: česká architektura padesátých let* [Sorela: Czech Architecture of the 1950s] (Prague: Národní galerie, 1994), 6, 12 (quote).

11. Vybíral, “Beacons of Revolutionary Ideas,” 95 (first quote), 98 (second and third quotes), 98–99 (fourth quote), 99 (fifth and sixth quotes).

12. Boris Groys, *The Total Art of Stalinism: Avant-Garde, Aesthetic Dictatorship, and Beyond*, trans. Charles Rougle (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992), 9.

13. Boris Groys, “The Art of Totality,” in *The Landscape of Stalinism: The Art and Ideology of Soviet Space*, ed. Evgeny Dobrenko and Eric Naiman (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2003), 112.

14. *Ibid.*, 116 (first quote), 117 (remaining quotes).

15. Catherine Cooke, "Beauty as a Route to 'the Radiant Future': Responses of Soviet Architecture," *Journal of Design History* 10, no. 2 (1997): 137–60. In the text, Cooke is highly critical of cultural historians such as Matthew Cullerne Bown, Hugh Hudson, and Timothy Colton for their "superficial and dismissive judgments" against the architects of the period, citing their insufficient understanding of architecture and its disciplinary history. *Ibid.*, 137.

16. *Ibid.*, 141 (original emphasis).

17. For example, Stephen Kotkin detailed some of the failings of the building industry in his study of Magnitogorsk. See Stephen Kotkin, *Magnetic Mountain: Stalinism as a Civilization* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995).

18. Czech architects were surprised to find that the Soviet building industry still lacked centralized mechanisms for standardization and typification in the early 1950s. At the National Archives in Prague there are more than three hundred pages of documentation about a one-month visit to the Soviet Union in 1954 by eleven Czech and Slovak architects, who were there to learn about the organization of their architectural administration. Jiří Voženílek was head of the delegation. See VVV, carton 38, NA.

19. A transformation was also under way in capitalist parts of Europe in the 1940s. Examples included English new town planning, regional housing types in the United States by architects such as Richard Neutra and William Wurster, and work by Scandinavian architects, including Alvar Aalto, Arne Jacobsen, and Jørn Utzon. The urban planning examples more closely followed Sedláková's thesis from *Sorela: česká architektura padesátých let*.

20. Klement Gottwald and other high-ranking Communists stayed in Moscow during the war with the support of Stalin. See Joseph Rothschild, *Return to Diversity: A Political History of East Central Europe since World War Two* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989), 25–75; and Bradley F. Abrams, *The Struggle for the Soul of the Nation: Czech Culture and the Rise of Communism* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2004), 178–98.

21. Under these policies, agricultural collectivization remained voluntary, some small business owners maintained rights to private ownership, and resources were still devoted to providing consumer goods. See Edward Taborsky, *Communism in Czechoslovakia, 1948–1960* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1961), 349–467, esp. 357–61, 398–403. Economic historian John Stevens notes that although investment in heavy industry began to strongly outpace investment in consumer goods by the end of the First Five-Year Plan (1953), growth in spending in these areas was relatively equal from 1948 to 1950. John N. Stevens, *Czechoslovakia at the Crossroads: The Economic Dilemmas of Communism in Postwar Czechoslovakia* (Boulder, CO: East European Monographs, 1985), 21.

22. On the Tito-Stalin split, see Rothschild, *Return to Diversity*, 125–46. Comecon was established in January 1949 to economically link Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Poland, Romania, and the Soviet Union. Members were expected to pool resources and develop specific products to market to all members. Czechoslovakia's role was the production of heavy machinery and other raw material-consuming capital goods. Hans Renner, *A History of Czechoslovakia since 1945* (London: Routledge, 1989), 21. On Korea, see Evgueni Bajanov, "Assessing the Politics of the Korean War, 1949–51," *CWIHP Bulletin*, no. 6–7 (winter 1995–1996); Stevens, *Czechoslovakia at the Crossroads*, 20.

23. See Igor Lukes, "The Rudolf Slansky Affair: New Evidence," *Slavic Review* 58, no. 1 (spring 1999): 160–187.

24. Taborsky, *Communism in Czechoslovakia*, 363, 401, 485, 565.

25. Kovály, *Under a Cruel Star*, 67 (quote), 96–97. Heda Margolius Kovály was the widow of Rudolf Margolius, one of the men sentenced to death in the Slánský show trial.
26. Halík, “Padesáta léta” [The 1950s], 284 (quote), 285. See also Dulla and Moravčíková, *Architektúra Slovenska v 20. storočí*, 177. The architectural administration itself recognized mid-1950 as the time when Stavoprojekt adopted “the widespread study of Socialist Realism and Soviet working methods.” Chart 19, “Organisace Stavoprojektu” [The Organization of Stavoprojekt], 1953, ÚKPK, carton 640, NA.
27. On the Russian case, see Evgeny Dobrenko and Eric Naiman, eds., *The Landscape of Stalinism: The Art and Ideology of Soviet Space* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2003).
28. Cooke, “Beauty as a Route to ‘the Radiant Future,’” 143, 147.
29. Ibid., 143, 148.
30. John Connelly, *Captive University: The Sovietization of East German, Czech, and Polish Higher Education, 1945–1956* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2000); Jiří Knapík, *Únor a kultura: sovětizace české kultury 1948–1950* [February and Culture: The Sovietization of Czech Culture] (Prague: Libri, 2004).
31. Quoted in Alfred French, *Czech Writers and Politics, 1945–1969* (Boulder, CO: East European Monographs, 1982), 56.
32. Alexej Kusák, *Kultura a politika v Československu, 1945–1956* [Culture and Politics in Czechoslovakia] (Prague: Torst, 1998), 281. For more on writers in the period, see Taborsky, *Communism in Czechoslovakia*, 562–78.
33. Halík, “Padesáta léta” [The 1950s], 284. On Andrei Zhdanov’s rhetoric, see Tereza Petišková, “Oficiální umění padesátých let” [Official Art of the 1950s], in *Dějiny českého výtvarného umění V. (1939–1958)* [Histories of Czech Creative Arts, vol. 5], ed. Rostislav Švácha and Marie Platovská (Prague: Academia, 2005), 342.
34. For an overview of socialist realist art in Czechoslovakia, see Petišková, *Československý socialistický realismus*; Petišková, “Oficiální umění padesátých let” [Official Art of the 1950s].
35. Lenka Bydžovská, “Artistic Forum” [Umělecká beseda], Grove Art Online, <http://www.oxfordartonline.com/subscriber/article/grove/art/Too4414> (accessed Mar. 24, 2010).
36. M. I. Ryzanin, “Historická architektura národů SSSR” [The Historical Architecture of the Nations of the Soviet Union], and “30 let sovětské architektury” [30 Years of Soviet Architecture] in *Architektura národů SSSR z dávné minulosti k výstavbě socialistického dneška* [The Architecture of the Nations of the Soviet Union from the Distant Past to the Building of the Socialist Present] (Prague: Umělecká beseda, 1949), 5–6, 7–18.
37. “30 let sovětské architektury” in *Architektura národů SSSR z dávné minulosti k výstavbě socialistického dneška*, 10, 15.
38. *Architektura národů SSSR z dávné minulosti k výstavbě socialistického dneška*, 6, 19–30. See also Greg Castillo, *Cold War on the Home Front: The Soft Power of Midcentury Design* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2009), 88–95.
39. Oldřich Starý, “Architektura národů SSSR” [Architecture of the Nations of the Soviet Union], *Architektura ČSR* 8, no. 3–4 (1949): 68 (first quote), 72.
40. V. Kusakov, “Stavitelství stalinské doby” [Building in the Stalinist Era], *Architektura ČSR* 8, no. 3–4 (1949): 73–75. The author was deputy chair of the Committee on Architecture for the Soviet Ministries.
41. Regarding the Communist Party’s use of Czech and Slovak national symbols, the Ninth Party Congress in May 1949 included performances by folk singers in tra-

ditional costumes and speeches by farmers accompanied by their animals. The congress was held at the Prague Exhibition Grounds, the site of the 1893 Jubilee Exhibition, remembered as the first fully “national” expression of Czech culture during the nineteenth century. It was also the site in May 1948 of the Slavic Agricultural Exhibition, designed by Jiří Kroha. See *IX.sjezd Komunistické strany Československa ve fotografii* [Ninth Congress of the Czechoslovak Communist Party in Photographs] (Prague: Vyd. kulturní a propagační oddělení sekr. ÚV KSČ, 1949).

42. For a history of the Czech lands in the nineteenth century, see Hugh LeCaine Agnew, *Origins of the Czech National Renaissance* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1993); and Derek Sayer, *The Coasts of Bohemia: A Czech History* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1998).

43. “Návrh veřejného prohlášení” [Proposal for a Public Proclamation], undated, 1948, 2, ÚKPK, carton 636, NA.

44. Jiří Kroha to Jiří Voženílek, Sept. 26, 1949, fond: Jiří Kroha (henceforth JK), folder: Dopisy odeslané [Sent letters], Brno City Museum [Muzeum města Brna] (henceforth MMB), Brno, Czech Republic.

45. Jiří Kroha to Jiří Voženílek, Sept. 26, 1949, Sept. 29, 1949, Sept. 3, 1950, all in JK, folder: Dopisy odeslané [Sent letters], MMB.

46. Katerina Clark, “Socialist Realism and the Sacralizing of Space,” in *The Landscape of Stalinism: The Art and Ideology of Soviet Space*, ed. E. A. Dobrenko and Eric Naiman (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2003), 3, 4.

47. Radomíra Sedláková, “Padesátá léta” [The 1950s], in *Česká architektura / Czech Architecture, 1945–1995*, ed. Karel Dušek (Prague: Obec architektů, 1995), 32.

48. Lakomý, “Úkoly výzkumného ústavu pro stavebnictví a architekturu ve vztahu k architektonické tvorbě” [The Work of the Research Institute for Building and Architecture in Relation to Architectural Production], 286.

49. *Ibid.*, 285.

50. *Ibid.*, 285–87.

51. See Connelly, *Captive University*.

52. “Stručná životopisná data” [Brief biographical data], after 1972, JK, loose papers, MMB; Milan Moráň, *Šedesát let české školy architektury v Brně, 1919–1979* [Sixty Years of the Czech School of Architecture in Brno] (Brno: Blok, 1980), 13, 16.

53. Schools of architecture were located in Prague and Brno before the war. A new school opened in Bratislava in 1946. On the architecture schools in the region, see Christopher Long, “East Central Europe: National Identity and International Perspective,” *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 61, no. 4 (2002): 519–29.

54. Wojciech Lesnikowski, review of *Architecture and Ideology in Eastern Europe during the Stalin Era* by Anders Åman, *Journal of Architectural Education* 48, no. 3 (Feb. 1995): 204.

55. See Pavel Janák and Irena Žantovská Murray, *Czech Cubism: Architecture and Design, 1910–1925* (New York: Cooper-Hewitt; Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution, 1992); Zdeněk Lukeš et al., *Český architektonický kubismus: podivuhodný směr, který se zrodil v Praze / Czech Architectural Cubism: A Remarkable Trend That Was Born in Prague* (Prague: Galerie Jaroslava Fragnera: Dan Merta, 2006); Vladimír Šlapeta and Daniela Karasová, eds., *Jan Kotěra, 1871–1923: The Founder of Modern Czech Architecture* (Prague: Municipal House and Kant, 2001).

56. Halík, “Ideologická architektura” [Ideological Architecture], 449; Sedláková, *Sorela*, 10.

57. The nickname Sorela was never used as an official term and does not appear in print at all in the 1950s. It later became the standard way to refer to the style of the period. See, for example, Sedláková, *Sorela*.

58. See Jiří Hrůza, “Nové město Šaca u Košic” [The New City of Šaca near Košice], *Architektura ČSR* 15, no. 1–2 (1956): 20–21; František Zounek, Růžena Svobodová, and Zdeněk Chlup, “Otázka architektury nového města Šacy” [The Question of Architecture in the New City of Šaca], *Architektura ČSR* 11, no. 3–4 (1952): 87–101.

59. This mill is now U.S. Steel Košice.

60. See Thomas P. Whitney, ed., *Khrushchev Speaks: Selected Speeches, Articles, and Press Conferences, 1949–1961* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1963), 153–92. Jiří Hrůza, Stefan Svetko, Viktor Rudiš, and František Zounek all entered the profession in this period and went on to successful careers. Rudiš and Zounek collaborated on the Letná housing development in Brno in the early 1960s.

61. Bohuslav Fuchs, Karel Honzík, Vladimír Karfík, and Ladislav Žák remained active in the universities rather than in practice. See Radomíra Sedláková, “Honzík, Karel,” Grove Art Online, <http://www.oxfordartonline.com/subscriber/article/grove/art/To38832>; Vladimír Šlapeta, “Fuchs, Bohuslav,” Grove Art Online, <http://www.oxfordartonline.com/subscriber/article/grove/art/To30089>; Vladimír Šlapeta, “Žák, Ladislav,” Grove Art Online, <http://www.oxfordartonline.com/subscriber/article/grove/art/To93175> (all accessed Mar. 24, 2010). Pavel Janák went on to become an expert in historic preservation. See Olga Herbenová and Vladimír Šlapeta, *Pavel Janák 1882–1956: Architektur und Kunstgewerbe* [Pavel Janák, 1882–1956: Architecture and the Applied Arts] (Prague: Kunstgewerbemuseum, 1984). On Karfík, see Vladimír Karfík, *Architekt si spomína* [An Architect Remembers] (Bratislava: Spolok architektov Slovenska, 1993).

62. Information on this organizational split is in ÚPKP, carton 637, NA.

63. Halík, “Ideologická architektura” [Ideological Architecture], 453–54. The full texts of the individual speeches can be found in ÚPKP, cartons 639–40, NA.

64. Jiří Kroha to Ferdinand Balcárek, Jan. 15, 1951, JK, folder: Dopisy odeslané [Sent letters], MMB. Architect Ferdinand Balcárek took over as deputy director at Stavoprojekt after Voženílek’s departure in 1951.

65. See “Stručná životopisná data” [Brief biographical data]. On Lakomý’s study group, see Lakomý, “Úkoly výzkumného ústavu pro stavebnictví a architekturu ve vztahu k architektonické tvorbě” [The Work of the Research Institute for Building and Architecture in Relation to Architectural Production], 285–87.

66. Pechar, *Československá architektura*, 25n92.

67. “Kandidátka výboru Svazu architektů” [Candidates for the Board of the Architects’ Union].

68. Janata, “Chodit vertikálně po horizontální zemi” [Walking Vertically across a Horizontal Country]. Documents on the institute are likely in the closed files of Stavoprojekt Prague at the National Archives.

69. Petišková, “Oficiální umění padesátých let” [Official Art of the 1950s], 342–44.

70. Andrei Zhdanov (1896–1948) was an ally of Stalin and member of the Politburo. After the war, he was responsible for the country’s cultural policies and set up Cominform (Communist Information Bureau) in 1947, when he would have worked directly with Kopecký, appointed minister of information in April 1945.

71. Zdeněk Nejedlý (1878–1962) was a respected musicologist and the first president of the Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences, from 1952 until his death. Historian Edward Taborsky writes that after 1948, despite being a “die-hard Communist,” Nejedlý imple-

mented an American-style educational system that “ignored the Soviet experience” and looked instead to “national traditions” and “ideals of humanity.” Taborsky, *Communism in Czechoslovakia*, 510 (first quote), 509 (second and third quotes). See also Jiří Křestan, “‘Poslední husita’ odchází: Zdeněk Nejedlý v osidlech kulturní politiky KSČ po roce 1945” [“The Last Hussite” Is Leaving: Zdeněk Nejedlý in the Snares of CPC Policy on Culture and the Arts after the Second World War], *Soudobé dějiny* 12, no. 1 (2005): 9–44; Oldřich Starý, “Zdeněk Nejedlý – příklad tvůrce a bojovníka” [Zdeněk Nejedlý: An Example of a Creator and a Fighter], *Architektura ČSR* 11, no. 7–9 (1952): 195–97.

72. Āman, *Architecture and Ideology in Eastern Europe during the Stalin Era*, 198. Other examples were in Berlin, Bucharest, Budapest, and Warsaw.

73. For more on the design, construction, and demolition of the monument, see *ibid.*, 197–204; Rudla Cainer, *Žulový Stalin: osudy pomníku a jeho autora* [Granite Stalin: The Fate of the Monument and Its Author] (Prague: ARSCI, 2008); Zdeněk Hojda and Jiří Pokorný, *Pomníky a zapomínky* [Monuments and Forgetting] (Prague: Paseka, 1996), 205–17.

74. On the various entries, see *Architektura ČSR* 9, no. 3–4 (1950): 63–77. Švec had been a pupil of Štursa’s uncle, modern sculptor Jan Štursa, rector of the Academy of Fine Arts in the early 1920s. See Cainer, *Žulový Stalin*, 202–3.

75. Oldřich Starý, “Pomník J. V. Stalina v Praze” [Monument of J. V. Stalin in Prague], *Architektura ČSR* 9, no. 3–4 (1950): 63–68.

76. Kathleen Knox, “Stalin: Here Yesterday, Gone Today,” *Prague Post*, Apr. 27, 1994. The “queues” became another source of jokes about the monument, since it was said that the ensemble looked like people waiting in line for something, not an uncommon site in communist countries at the time.

77. Āman, *Architecture and Ideology in Eastern Europe during the Stalin Era*, 200–201.

78. Marie Hořínková, *Příběhy pražských zahrad* [Stories of Prague’s Gardens] (Prague: Academia, 2004), 124. There is no evidence of a direct link between the end of Štursa’s tenure and the monument, although it was certainly a sign that something was changing at the university.

79. Many people believe that Švec’s shame over the monument led to his suicide. See Hojda and Pokorný, *Pomníky a zapomínky*, 213. Štursa claimed that the real reason was the suicide of Švec’s wife a few weeks earlier, an action spurred by marital problems. He killed himself the same way she did, using a gas stove in the kitchen. Knox, “Stalin: Here Yesterday, Gone Today.” Štursa’s story is confirmed in Cainer, *Žulový Stalin*, 218–19.

80. Meduna, “Nová Ostrava” [New Ostrava], 259–63.

81. Little is written about the Hotel Internacionál building despite its prominent public profile. Since it was designed by an architect working for the army, rather than by Stavoprojekt staff, articles about it do not appear in *Architektura ČSR* or *Sovětská architektura*. See Karel Ksandr, “Význam socialistického realismu v dějinách architektury na příkladu hotelu Internacionál v Praze 6-Dejvicích” [The Meaning of Socialist Realism in the History of Architecture through the Example of the Hotel Internacionál in Prague 6-Dejvice], in *Poválečná totalitní architektura a otázky její památkové ochrany: sborník příspěvků* [Postwar Totalitarian Architecture and Questions of Its Preservation: Conference Proceedings], ed. Nadia Goryczková and Martina Vymětalová (Ostrava: Státní památkový ústav v Ostravě, 2002), 15–18.

82. František Fiala, “Kritické poznámky k soutěži na ústřední dům armády v Praze” [Critical Remarks on the Competition for the Army Headquarters in Prague], *Architek-*

tura ČSR 13, no. 5 (1954): 97–113; Jiří Novotný, “K soutěži na ústřední dům armády v Dejvicích” [On the Competition for the Army Headquarters in Dejvice], *Architektura ČSR* 13, no. 5 (1954): 114–21. (There was a page numbering error in volume 13 of the journal, starting with issue number 5 and continuing until issue number 7, when it was corrected. The yearly index corrected the error listing Fiala, 129–45, and Novotný, 146–53.)

83. Kroha and Nejedlý worked together in the Union of Czechoslovak-Soviet Friendship (Svaz československo sovětského přátelství). Nejedlý was president and Kroha was an active member. On behalf of the organization, Kroha gave seven lectures in five cities from October to December 1951. See Jiří Kroha to Svaz československo sovětského přátelství – ústřední sekretariát [Union of Czechoslovak-Soviet Friendship, Central Administration], Dec. 5, 1951, JK, folder: Hlavní architekt atelieru [Head Architect of the Atelier], MMB.

84. Zdeněk Lakomý, “Typisace a architektura” [Typification and Architecture], *Architektura ČSR* 10, no. 10–12 (1951): 311, 312.

85. *Ibid.*, 301.

86. J. Ledvina, “Prefabrikované architektonické prvky na stavbě” [Prefabricated Architectural Elements for Buildings], *Architektura ČSR* 11, no. 7–9 (1952): 265–66.

87. See, for example, *Navrhování dělnických sídlišť* [The Design of Workers’ Housing Developments] (Prague: Průmyslové vydavatelství, 1951); *Vývoj sovětské architektury* [The Development of Soviet Architecture] (Prague: Orbis, 1953); Andrej Vladimirovič Bunin and M. G. Kruglova, *Architektonická kompozice měst: určeno pro architekty, studenty architektonických škol a pro široký okruh specialistů* [The Architectural Composition of Cities: Intended for Architects, Students in the Architectural Schools, and the Wider Circle of Specialists], trans. Radim Dejmal (Prague: Ústav architektury a územního plánování, 1952); A. G. Mordvinov et al., *Sovětská architektura: soubor theoretických studií* [Soviet Architecture: A Collection of Theoretical Essays] (Prague: Orbis, 1951).

88. The term *architektonický dědictví* [architectural heritage] became an important slogan in the context of socialist realism in Czechoslovakia. Because the style was meant to be “national in form, socialist in content,” the country had to establish a “national” vocabulary that was derived from examples of local or vernacular architecture. See, for example, Jiří Hrůza and Pavel Svojitka, “O významu architektonického dědictví” [On the Meaning of Architectural Heritage], *Architektura ČSR* 11, no. 3–4 (1952): 74–76.

89. There were more than 80 pages of student projects in *Architektura ČSR* 12, no. 8–10 (1953). It was also the journal’s shortest volume in its forty-year history—only 252 pages, as compared to 364 pages in 1952, 318 pages in 1954, and 593 pages in 1956.

90. Marie Benešová and Jan Svoboda, “Správní budova slovenského plánovacího úřadu v Bratislavě” [The Administrative Building for the Slovak Planning Office in Bratislava], *Architektura ČSR* 10, no. 3–4 (1951): 72.

91. Josef Havlíček, *Návrhy a stavby* [Projects and Buildings] (Prague: Státní nakladatelství technické literatury, 1964), 70–78.

92. See, for example, Josef Grus, “Na okraj soutěže památníku slovenského národního povstání” [From the Sideline of the Competition for a Monument to the Slovak National Uprising], *Architektura ČSR* 11, no. 5–6 (1952): 151–61.

93. Eduard Staša, “Kritické poznámky k soutěži KNV v Gottwaldově” [Critical Remarks on the Competition of the Regional National Committee in Gottwaldov], *Architektura ČSR* 10, no. 10–12 (1951): 319–29; Jiří Voženílek, “K soutěži na budova KNV Gottwaldově” [On the Competition for the Regional National Committee Building in Gottwaldov], *Architektura ČSR* 10, no. 10–12 (1951): 330–33.

94. The surviving family in Canada retained the Baťa name through legal action in international courts. See Tomas Bata and Sonja Sinclair, *Bata: Shoemaker to the World* (Toronto: Stoddart, 1990).

95. See Catherine Cooke, “Manhattan sulla Moscova” [Manhattan in Moscow], *Domus*, no. 840 (Sept. 2004): 88–101.

96. Voženilek, “K soutěži na budova KNV Gottwaldově” [On the Competition for the Regional National Committee Building in Gottwaldov], 333.

97. Hana Stašková, “Urbanistické a kompoziční otázky v soutěžních projektech na kulturní a pionýrský dům v Ostravě” [Urban and Compositional Questions about the Competitions Projects for the House of Culture and House of Pioneers in Ostrava], *Architektura ČSR* 13, no. 8 (1954): 235–44. By this point, Nejedlý had lost his position, and the renamed Ministry of Education was led by prominent Communist intellectual Ladislav Štoll.

98. For more on the urban development of the city, see Martin Strakoš, “Nová Ostrava a její satelity - část 1” [New Ostrava and Its Satellites, Part 1], *Stavba*, no. 3 (2003): 58–63; Martin Strakoš, “Nová Ostrava a její satelity - část 2” [New Ostrava and Its Satellites, Part 2], *Stavba*, no. 4 (2003): 59–64; Martin Strakoš, *Průvodce architekturou Ostravy / Ostrava Architecture Guide* (Ostrava: Národní památkový ústav, územní odborné pracoviště v Ostravě, 2009).

99. Michal Kohout, Stephan Templ, and Pavel Zatloukal, eds., *Česká architektura - architektura XX.století. Díl I. Morava a Slezsko* [Czech Republic: 20th-Century Architecture, Part 1; Moravia and Silesia] (Prague: Zlatý řez, 2005), entry by Martin Strakoš, 153. Strakoš also discusses the project in his *Stavba* articles (see previous note), where he frames the socialist realist period in terms of Mikhail Bakhtin’s concept of carnival.

100. For example, volume 10 opened with an article by the editor, Oldřich Starý, on the history of Russian architecture beginning in the Middle Ages. See Oldřich Starý, “Sovětská architektura” [Soviet Architecture], *Architektura ČSR* 10, no. 1–2 (1951): 3–23. It was followed by updates on Stavoprojekt proposals and continued with a translation of an essay by A. G. Mordvinov, president of the Architecture Academy in Moscow; see A. G. Mordvinov, “Architektura mnohopatrových obytných domů, část 1” [Architecture of Multi-story Residential Buildings, Part 1], *Architektura ČSR* 10, no. 1–2 (1951): 46–53. This pattern continued in the journal for several issues. The second part of the Mordvinov essay appeared in the next issue; see A. G. Mordvinov, “Architektura mnohopatrových obytných domů, část 2” [Architecture of Multi-story Residential Buildings, Part 2], *Architektura ČSR* 10, no. 3–4 (1951): 112–15. The articles were copiously illustrated with contemporary examples of completed projects.

101. “Náš nový časopis ‘Sovětská architektura’” [Our New Journal *Soviet Architecture*], *Architektura ČSR* 10, no. 5–6 (1951): 196.

102. The journal was indexed at the end of year it was published (1951, 1952, 1953, and 1954) and arranged into these categories, although individual issues did not demarcate such headings.

103. See, for example, “Průmyslová základna sovětské architektury” [The Industrial Foundation of Soviet Architecture], *Sovětská architektura* 3, no. 3 (1953): 315–39; and G. Oščepkov, “Vynikající řešení architektury obytného domu” [Excellent Architectural Solutions to the Dwelling House], *Sovětská architektura* 1, no. 3 (1951): 246–58.

104. Cooke, “Beauty as a Route to ‘the Radiant Future,’” 143–47.

105. V. Koreňkov, “Potřebujeme jednotnou metodiku typového projektování” [We Need a Uniform Method of Typified Design], *Sovětská architektura* 3, no. 1 (1953): 12–17.

106. Entire issue, *Architektura ČSR* 11, no. 10–12 (1952): 279–364; Jaroslav Fragner,

“Záznam ze sovětské cesty” [Recounting of a Soviet Journey], *Architektura ČSR* 12, no. 1–2 (1953): 4–9; and Vladimír Chamrád, “Zájezd Československých architektů do SSSR” [The Tour of Czechoslovak Architects to the USSR], *Sovětská architektura* 3, no. 1 (1953): 1–8. In his article from issue number 10–12 in 1952, Chamrád noted that their group was the last from the Eastern Bloc to visit, blaming the end of such tours on repercussions from the Slanský arrest. The trial began only weeks after the group returned and likely occurred at the same time that the article was written. See Vladimír Chamrád, “Ze zájezdu Československých architektů do SSSR” [From the Tour of Czechoslovak Architects to the USSR], *Architektura ČSR* 11, no. 10–12 (1952): 280.

107. Summary of issue no. 10–12, *Architektura ČSR* 11, no. 10–12 (1952): 362.

108. Historians have documented living conditions in Soviet cities in the 1950s and portray a more difficult existence than described by the delegation. See William Craft Brumfield and Blair A. Ruble, *Russian Housing in the Modern Age: Design and Social History* (Washington, DC: Woodrow Wilson Center Press; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993); Juliane Furst, ed., *Late Stalinist Russia: Society between Reconstruction and Reinvention* (London: Routledge, 2006); Melanie Ilic, Susan E. Reid, and Lynne Attwood, eds., *Women in the Khrushchev Era* (Houndmills, England: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004).

109. Jaroslav Fragner, “Záznam ze sovětské cesty” [Recounting of a Soviet Journey], *Architektura ČSR* 12, no. 1 (1953): 9.

110. See J. Krise and O. Novotný, “Sídliště Šumbark-Bludovice” [The Housing Development Šumbark-Bludovice], *Architektura ČSR* 13, no. 1 (1954): 4–7. Also, “Postavíme města socialismu” [We Are Building the Cities of Socialism], undated (after Jan. 2, 1952), VVV, carton 126, NA.

111. “Náš nový časopis ‘Sovětská architektura’” [Our New Journal *Soviet Architecture*], 196 (quote). The funds and the paper rations that had been used to publish *Sovětská architektura* were transferred to the direct control of the Union of Architects in 1955 for the production of a publication of their choice. “*Sovětská architektura* – převod vydavatelského oprávnění” [*Sovětská architektura*: Transfer of Publishing License], Jan. 8, 1955, fond 867: Ministerstvo kultury [Ministry of Culture], carton 165, NA. The result was *Československý architekt*, a biweekly publication in a newspaper format with event listings, articles about current projects, and spirited commentary on contemporary practice. Its first issue appeared in December 1955, and it continued until 1990.

112. *Prace*, Aug. 12, 1951, 1 (first quote); *Lidová demokracie*, Aug. 12, 1951, 3 (second quote). For the full text of Kliment’s speech, see “Postavíme města socialismu” [We Are Building the Cities of Socialism], C1–C13.

113. *Prace*, Aug. 11, 1951, 1.

114. Meduna, “Nová Ostrava” [New Ostrava], 262. For a complete set of documents related to the plans for Nová Ostrava in 1952, see “Postavíme města socialismu” [We Are Building the Cities of Socialism], A1–A67, C1–C13, D1–D3, E1, F1–F2, G3/1–G20/4, H1–H20.

115. “Postavíme města socialismu” [We Are Building the Cities of Socialism], A5, A17–A18. Of the apartments, 60 to 70 percent would be two rooms plus kitchen, 25 to 30 percent would be three rooms plus kitchen, and 5 to 10 percent would be four rooms plus kitchen.

116. Cooke, “Beauty as a Route to ‘the Radiant Future,’” 141.

117. “Postavíme města socialismu” [We Are Building the Cities of Socialism], A37.

118. The stream was called Porubka [Little Poruba] and the name Poruba was derived from a word meaning forest clearing. Strakoš, *Průvodce architekturou Ostravy / Ostrava Architecture Guide*, 241.

119. Strakoš, *Průvodce architekturou Ostravy / Ostrava Architecture Guide*, 242–65.
120. Strakoš, “Nová Ostrava a její satelity - část 2” [New Ostrava and Its Satellites, Part 2], 60.
121. Rostislav Švácha, *The Architecture of New Prague, 1895–1945* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1995), 432.
122. Groys, “Art of Totality,” 112.
123. Ibid., 111.
124. Strakoš, *Průvodce architekturou Ostravy / Ostrava Architecture Guide*, 335–36.
125. Meduna, “Nová Ostrava” [New Ostrava], 259.
126. Strakoš, *Průvodce architekturou Ostravy / Ostrava Architecture Guide*, 335–36.
127. Kohout, Templ, and Zatloukal, eds., *Česká architektura - architektura XX.století. Díl I. Morava a Slezsko* [Czech Republic: 20th-Century Architecture, Part 1; Moravia and Silesia], 141–54; Strakoš, *Průvodce architekturou Ostravy / Ostrava Architecture Guide*, 43–180.
128. The Ministry of the Interior prepared a detailed report about the current state of the Ostrava region for the Central Committee of the Czechoslovak Communist Party in 1950. See “Zpráva o stavu lidové správy v Ostravském kraji” [Report on the State of the People’s Administration in the Ostrava Region], 1950 (month unknown), 1–112, esp. 22–24, ÚKPK, carton 128, NA.
129. Personal correspondence with Martin Strakoš, Sept. 2002.
130. For election results, see Jiří Sláma and Karel Kaplan, *Die Parlamentswahlen in der Tschechoslowakei 1935 – 1946 – 1948: Eine statistische Analyse* [The Parliamentary Elections in Czechoslovakia 1935–1946–1948: A Statistical Analysis] (Munich: Oldenbourg, 1986), 118. Ostrava’s support for the Communists was among the highest in Moravia; only the mining and textile cities in the Jeseník Mountains had vote totals of 50 percent or more for the Communists. The numbers do not, however, compare to towns in the borderlands in northern Bohemia, where Communists often gained more than 60 percent of the vote.
131. Vilém Plaček, “K bytové a občanské výstavbě na Ostravsku, 1949–1960” [On the Residential and Civic Building in the Ostrava Region], *Časopis slezského muzea Serie B* 36 (1987): 97.
132. “Zpráva o stavu lidové správy v Ostravském kraji” [Report on the State of the People’s Administration in the Ostrava Region], 3.
133. There were letters between the construction managers, the architects, and the ministries about the lack of materials, and even the workers themselves were complaining about not being able to complete their work. In a newsletter from the enterprise called Pozemní stavby, in Karviná, employees wrote articles such as “Why Are We Waiting for Materials?” and in them complained that “today the bricklayers were either waiting for mortar or for bricks or again for concrete.” See fond: Vládní komise pro výstavbu Ostravska [Government Commission for Building the Ostrava region], carton 24, folder 65, Zemský archiv v Opavě [Regional Archive in Opava], Opava, Czech Republic.
134. Meduna, “Nová Ostrava” [New Ostrava], 262 (first three quotes), 263 (fourth quote).
135. An extensive set of maps detailing the existing city, the regional transportation systems, and the geological conditions of the area was prepared in 1953. See “Mapy: general revíru ostravsko-karvinských dolů” [Maps: General Mining Area of the Ostrava-Karviná Mines], Mar. 10, 1953, VVV, carton 593, NA. For another example of urban planning in a mining area, see Eagle Glassheim, “Ethnic Cleansing, Communism, and Envi-

ronmental Devastation in Czechoslovakia's Borderlands, 1945–1989,” *Journal of Modern History* 78, no. 1 (2006): 65–92.

136. A 1948 report on damage caused by war and mine subsidence in the Karviná region, including photographs of damaged structures, can be found in fond 996: Ministerstvo techniky [Ministry of Technology] (henceforth MT), carton 306, NA.

137. Meduna, “Nová Ostrava” [New Ostrava], 262.

138. Ibid., 263. The rendering from 1952 does not show the proposed widening of the canal.

139. There is a technical report on the project contained within a 1946 Ministry of Technology analysis. See “Přípravná opatření k provádění budovatelského programu třetí vlády” [The Preparatory Arrangements of the Building Program of the Third Government], 1946, 14–21, MT, carton 303, NA.

140. In 2003, the Council of Europe returned to the idea of a Danube-Oder-Elbe Canal and several feasibility studies were conducted. Environmental groups fought hard to stop the project because of its potential impact on local ecosystems. See “Danube-Oder-Elbe,” Danube-Oder-Elbe Association, <http://www.tinavienna.at/doev/index.php> (accessed Mar. 15, 2010).

141. Meduna, “Nová Ostrava” [New Ostrava], 263.

142. For a site plan and other archival documents related to the final design, see VVV, carton 127, NA.

143. Personal correspondence with Martin Strakoš, Feb. 2007.

144. Strakoš, “Nová Ostrava a její satelity - část 2” [New Ostrava and Its Satellites, Part 2], 60.

145. *Architektura národů SSSR z dávné minulosti k výstavbě socialistického dneška*, illustration 22 in catalogue, n.p.

146. The Admiralty was also shown in the 1949 exhibition. See *ibid.*, item 22.2, n.p. Several images of St. Petersburg (Leningrad) are on the exhibition list, although the photographs themselves do not survive.

147. Strakoš, *Průvodce architekturou Ostravy / Ostrava Architecture Guide*, 252–53, 260, 415. Jelčaninov was born in Ukraine and educated in Prague.

148. Strakoš, “Nová Ostrava a její satelity - část 2” [New Ostrava and Its Satellites, Part 2], 61.

149. Strakoš, *Průvodce architekturou Ostravy / Ostrava Architecture Guide*, 252–53.

150. For an example of how Soviet architecture and Parisian urbanism were portrayed positively to Czech and Slovak architects, see Bunin and Kruglova, *Architektonická kompozice měst* [The Architectural Composition of Cities].

151. Sgraffito is a technique of applying multiple layers of plaster in contrasting colors to a surface. The top layer is then scratched away in decorative patterns to reveal the color behind. The decorative scenes created using this method were sometimes bizarre or inappropriate. On the Poruba Street tower above the cornice, there are sgraffito images of nude children that look like cherubs. In one case, a male child is shown urinating, and others are engaged in activities that seem out of place, such as playing with a hockey stick. The juxtaposition of the nudity and the everyday activities makes the images seem perverted rather than intellectual.

152. The sculptors were Vladislav Gajda and Jiří Myzak, inspired by J. V. Myslbek. Strakoš, *Průvodce architekturou Ostravy / Ostrava Architecture Guide*, 252.

153. Eve Blau, *The Architecture of Red Vienna, 1919–1934* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1999), 252–339.

154. Ibid., 287. Martin Strakoš also uses the term *superblock* for buildings in Poruba. See Strakoš, *Průvodce architekturou Ostravy / Ostrava Architecture Guide*, 248–49.
155. Blau, *Architecture of Red Vienna*, 327.
156. Ibid., 303.
157. Sedláková, *Sorela*, 12.
158. Groys, “Art of Totality,” 115.
159. Cooke, “Beauty as a Route to ‘the Radiant Future,’” 149.
160. “Postavíme města socialismu” [We Are Building the Cities of Socialism], A3. Also quoted in Strakoš, “Nová Ostrava a její satelity - část 2” [New Ostrava and Its Satellites, Part 2],” 62.

CHAPTER 4. A VISION OF SOCIALIST ARCHITECTURE

Epigraph: Jiří Kroha, “Socialistická architektura – architektura míru” [Socialist Architecture: Architecture of Peace], *Architektura ČSR* 11, no. 3–4 (1952): 68–69.

1. A recent exhibition catalogue on Kroha corrects this misperception; see Marcela Macharačková, ed., *Jiří Kroha (1893–1974): Architect, Painter, Designer, Theorist; A 20th-Century Metamorphosis* (Brno: ERA and Muzeum města Brna, 2007). An earlier version of this chapter was published in this catalogue: Kimberly Elman Zarecor, “Stavoprojekt and the Atelier of National Artist Jiří Kroha in the 1950s,” in *Jiří Kroha (1893–1974): Architect, Painter, Designer, Theorist; A 20th-Century Metamorphosis*, ed. Marcela Macharačková (Brno: ERA and Muzeum města Brna, 2007), 328–65.

2. First held in 1921, the Spartakiada was a Communist mass gymnastics festival that was revived in 1955 and held every five years until 1990. See Petr Roubal, “Politics of Gymnastics: Mass Gymnastic Displays under Communism in Central and Eastern Europe,” *Body and Society* 9, no. 2 (2003): 1–25; and Petr Roubal, “A Didactic Project Transformed into the Celebration of a Ritual: Czechoslovak Spartakiads, 1955–1990,” *Journal of Modern European History* 4, no. 1 (2006): 90–113.

3. Anders Åman posits Kroha as one of four paradigmatic architects in the region who did not resist the new order after 1948. See Anders Åman, *Architecture and Ideology in Eastern Europe during the Stalin Era* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1992), 165–69. Åman incorrectly claims that Kroha “disavowed himself as a practicing architect” in the 1950s. Ibid., 168.

4. Historians such as John Connolly and Jiří Knapík have used the term *sovietization* to describe cultural and institutional transformations in Czech society after 1948.

5. One important figure in his life was the Brno party secretary, Otto Šling, a defendant in the 1952 Slanský trial. Šling was arrested in 1950 and received a death sentence in 1952.

6. Jiří Kroha, “Manifestační projev” [Statement of a Manifesto], *Architektura ČSR* 5, no. 1 (1946): 22–24.

7. Jiří Kroha to Antonín Zapotocký, Feb. 15, 1949, fond: Jiří Kroha (henceforth JK), folder: Dopisy odeslané A.B.C. [Sent Letters, alphabetized] (henceforth DO - A.B.C.), Muzeum města Brna [Museum of the City of Brno] (henceforth MMB), Brno, Czech Republic. The letter was sent with a copy of *Architektura*, no. 9 (1948), which featured Kroha’s work at the 1948 Slavic Agricultural Exhibition in Prague. In JK, folder: Hlavní architekt ateliéru [Head Architect of the Atelier] (henceforth HAA), MMB, there are copies of a series of letters written by Jiří Kroha, dated February 14, 195[2], and addressed to various politicians, including Minister of Defense Alexej Čepicka, Minister of Industry Gustav Kliment, Zdeněk Fierlinger, Zdeněk Nejedlý, Ladislav Štoll, and Antonín Zapo-

tocký. He sent each letter with a copy of *Architektura ČSR* 10, no. 7–9 (1951), which featured more than forty pages of Kroha's projects and writings as well as an article dedicated to the construction of Nová Ostrava. See also Jiří Kroha to Zdeněk Fierlinger, June 24, 1952, JK, folder: Výstavba nového socialistického města Nová Dubnica [Construction of the New Socialist City Nová Dubnica] (henceforth VNSM-ND), MMB.

8. Jiří Kroha to Místní organizace KŠC 69, Praha 10 [Local Communist Party Organization 69, Prague district 10], Dec. 15, 1949, JK, folder: Dopisy odeslané [Sent Letters] (henceforth DO), MMB. In the letter, Kroha asks the local organization to excuse his chauffeur from meetings and other events because he is required to be at work for fifteen hours a day, seven days a week, including holidays.

9. Minister Kahuda, Ministry of Education and Culture, to Státní ústav památkové péče a ochrany přírody [State Institute for Monuments' Preservation and Care of the Countryside], July 15, 1958, JK, loose papers, MMB.

10. Jiří Kroha, *Sovětská architektonická avantgarda* [The Soviet Architectural Avant-Garde] (Prague: Odeon, 1973), esp. 77–85.

11. "These ke statute pobočky Mistrovský atelier národního umělce Ing. Arch. Jiřího Krohy" [Theses on the Statutes of the Branch Office, the Master Atelier of National Artist Jiří Kroha], July 6, 1956, 1, fond 1185: Ústřední správa pro bytovou a občanskou výstavbu [Central Administration for Housing and Civic Construction] (henceforth ÚSBOV), carton 130, Národní archiv [National Archives] (henceforth NA), Prague, Czech Republic.

12. Documents from the investigation can be found in ÚSBOV, carton 130, NA.

13. See Nikita Sergeevich Khrushchev, *The "Secret" Speech Delivered to the Closed Session of the Twentieth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union* (Nottingham, England: Spokesman Books, 1976).

14. For example, see Joseph Rothschild, *Return to Diversity: A Political History of East Central Europe since World War II* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989), 166–68.

15. Michal Kohout, Stephan Templ, and Pavel Zatloukal, eds., *Česká architektura - architektura XX.století. Díl I. Morava a Slezsko* [Czech Republic: 20th-Century Architecture, Part 1: Moravia and Silesia] (Prague: Zlatý řez, 2005), 323.

16. See Eve Blau, Nancy J. Troy, and David Cottingham, *Architecture and Cubism* (Montreal: Canadian Centre for Architecture; Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1997); Zdeněk Lukeš et al., *Český architektonický kubismus: podivuhodný směr, který se zrodil v Praze / Czech Architectural Cubism: A Remarkable Trend That Was Born in Prague* (Prague: Galerie Jaroslava Fragnera, Dan Merta, 2006).

17. Mahulena Nešlehová, "Impulses of Futurism and Czech Art," in *International Futurism in Arts and Literature*, ed. Günter Berghaus (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2000), 132–33.

18. Several books have been written about Brno architecture between 1918 and 1939, including Zdeněk Kudělka and Jindřich Chatrný, eds., *For New Brno: Brno's Architecture, 1919–1939* (Brno: Muzeum města Brna, 2000); Zdeněk Kudělka and Jindřich Chatrný, eds., *O nové Brno: brněnská architektura, 1919–1939* (Brno: Muzeum města Brna, 2000); Jan Sedlák, ed., *Great Villas of Brno* (Brno: Agency Foibos; National Landmarks Commission; Museum of the City of Brno, 2006); and Vladimír Šlapeta, *Brnon funkcionalistit: näyttely, 1983 / The Brno Functionalists: Exhibition, 1983* (Helsinki: Suomen rakennustaiteen museo; Jyväskylä: Alvar Aalto Museum, 1983).

19. Monika Platzer and Klaus Spechtenhauser, eds., *Jiří Kroha: Kubist, Expressionist, Funktionalist, Realist* [Jiří Kroha: Cubist, Expressionist, Functionalist, Realist] (Vienna: Architektur Zentrum Wien and Vertrieb Sonderzahl Verlagsges, 1998), 10.

20. J. B. Svrček, *Národní umělec Jiří Kroha* [National Artist Jiří Kroha] (Prague: Státní nakladatelství krásné literatury, hudby a umění, 1960), 31.
21. Reprinted as Jiří Kroha, *Sociologický fragment bydlení: instruktážní a fotomontážní dokumentace cyklu z roku 1932/33* [The Sociological Housing Fragment: Instructional and Photomontage Documentary Cycle from 1932–1933] (Brno: Krajské středisko státní památkové péče a ochrany přírody, 1973). See also Klaus Spechtenhauser, “Sociological Functionalism: On the Sociological Housing Fragment by Jiří Kroha,” in *Jiří Kroha (1893–1974): Architect, Painter, Designer, Theorist; A 20th-Century Metamorphosis*, ed. Marcela Macharačková (Brno: Era; Muzeum města Brna, 2007), 226–71.
22. Platzter and Spechtenhauser, eds., *Jiří Kroha*, 99.
23. Svrček, *Národní umělec Jiří Kroha*, 31.
24. Spechtenhauser, “Sociological Functionalism,” 239; Svrček, *Národní umělec Jiří Kroha*, 32–33.
25. For details of the trials, see Shawn Clybor, “Culture and Communism: Czechoslovakia and the Czech Avant-Garde, 1920–1956” (PhD diss., Northwestern University, 2010), chap. 2. See also Milan Moráň, *Šedesát let české školy architektury v Brně, 1919–1979* [Sixty Years of the Czech School of Architecture in Brno] (Brno: Blok, 1980), 78.
26. Svrček, *Národní umělec Jiří Kroha*, 33.
27. Jiří Kroha, *Býtová otázka v SSSR: typický obraz vzrůstajícího socialistického města* [The Housing Question in the Soviet Union: The Typical Picture of a Growing Socialist City] (Prague: Pavel Prokop, 1935).
28. Spechtenhauser, “Sociological Functionalism,” 269.
29. Lenka Kudělková, “The Architectural and Urban Planning Work of Jiří Kroha in 1927–1936,” esp. 208–12; Rostislav Švácha, “Against the Tide: Kroha’s Surrealist Fling,” 272–79, both in *Jiří Kroha (1893–1974): Architect, Painter, Designer, Theorist; A 20th-Century Metamorphosis*, ed. Marcela Macharačková (Brno: ERA and Muzeum města Brna, 2007).
30. “Stručná životopisná data,” JK, loose papers, MMB.
31. Jiří Kroha, Vilém Kuba, and Josef Polášek, “Nájemné domy zemského hlavního města Brna” [Rental Apartment Buildings for the Municipality of the City of Brno], *Architektura ČSR* 9, no. 6–7 (1948): 216–18.
32. For more on Kroha’s work in the 1940s, see Martin Strakoš, “On the Road to Socialist Realism—Kroha’s Architecture in the 1940s,” in *Jiří Kroha (1893–1974): Architect, Painter, Designer, Theorist; A 20th-Century Metamorphosis*, ed. Marcela Macharačková (Brno: ERA and Muzeum města Brna, 2007), 292–327.
33. Jiří Kroha to Vlasta Štursová, Feb. 19, 1946, ÚKPK, carton 636, NA; Jiří Kroha, “Bydlení pracujícího člověka” [Housing of the Working Man], *Rovnost*, Mar. 30, 1947, 1–2; Jiří Kroha, “Byt domovem lepšího rodinného života” [A Better Family Life with Apartment Living], *Rovnost*, May 1, 1947, 15; Jiří Kroha, “Budeme stavět laciněji?” [Will We Build More Cheaply?], *Rovnost*, Apr. 6, 1947, page unknown; Jiří Kroha, “Světové výročí – 30 let SSSR” [Worldwide Anniversary: 30 Years of the USSR], *Rovnost*, Nov. 7, 1947, page unknown. Copies of newspaper articles in JK, loose papers, MMB.
34. *Almanach výstavba soudobé kultury v Brně 1928* (Brno: NPCSR, 1928), 11–18, 49.
35. Jaroslav Anděl, *The New Vision for the New Architecture: Czechoslovakia, 1918–1938* (Prague: Slovart, 2005), 30–47.
36. Jiří Kroha, “Slovanská zemědělská výstava v Praze 1948” [The 1948 Slavic Agricultural Exhibition in Prague], *Architektura ČSR* 7, no. 9 (1948): 273–95. See *ibid.*, 292, 294 for a list of project participants.

37. Jiří Kroha to Svaz socialistických architektů, Aug. 21, 1948, ÚKPK, carton 636, NA. The first architect with the title was Dušan Jurkovič, who received the honor in 1946 and died in 1947. See Christopher Long, "'The Works of Our People': Dušan Jurkovič and the Slovak Art Revival," *Studies in the Decorative Arts* 12, no. 1 (fall–winter 2004–2005): 2–29.
38. Moráň, *Šedesát let české školy architektury v Brně*, 13, 16.
39. "Architektonická rada Stavoprojektu" [The Architectural Council of Stavoprojekt], *Architektura ČSR* 7 (1948): unpaginated addition following the yearly index; "Stručná životopisná data, Část II" [Brief Biographical Data, Part 2], after 1972, JK, loose papers, MMB.
40. "Zápis I.celostátní porady vedoucích všech oddělení Stavoprojektu, konané dne 7.I.1949 v Praze" [Minutes from the First Nationwide Meeting of the Heads of the Stavoprojekt Ateliers on January 7, 1949 in Prague], Jan. 7, 1949, Kroha's speech, 1, MT, carton 431, NA.
41. Karl Marx, "A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy," 1859, as quoted in Leszek Kołakowski, *Main Currents of Marxism*, vol. 1, *Its Rise, Growth, and Dissolution* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1978), 335.
42. *Ibid.*, 338.
43. Jiří Kroha, "Architektura socialistické budování" [The Architecture of Socialist Building], *Architektura ČSR* 8 (1949): 131.
44. Jiří Kroha, "Architektura zájmem a majetkem pracujícího lidu" [Architecture in the Interest and for the Enrichment of the Working People], *Architektura ČSR* 10, no. 7–9 (1951): 234.
45. Pavel Halík, "Ideologická architektura (Ideological Architecture)," *Umění* 44, no. 5 (1996): 448 (quote), 449.
46. Dita Dvořáková, "Between Absolute Art and Normalisation: The Theory behind Jiří Kroha's Architecture," in *Jiří Kroha (1893–1974): Architect, Painter, Designer, Theorist; A 20th-Century Metamorphosis*, ed. Marcela Macharačková (Brno: ERA and Muzeum města Brna, 2007), 368.
47. Kroha, "Architektura socialistické budování" [The Architecture of Socialist Building], 129–38; Jiří Kroha, "Pavilion ministerstva zemědělství na výstavě '100 let českého národního života' v Kroměříži" [Pavilion for the Ministry of Agriculture at the Exhibition '100 Years of Czech National Life' in Kroměříž], *Architektura ČSR* 8, no. 5–6 (1949): 152–55; Karel Lodr, "Sovětský svaz náš učitel – náš bratr" [The Soviet Union Our Teacher, Our Brother], *Architektura ČSR* 9, no. 3–4 (1950): 101; Tereza Petišková, *Československý socialistický realismus 1948–1958* [Czechoslovak Socialist Realism] (Prague: Gallery Rudolfinum, 2002), 70–71.
48. Oldřich Starý, "Pomník J. V. Stalina v Praze" [Monument of J. V. Stalin in Prague], *Architektura ČSR* 9, no. 3–4 (1950): 63–69.
49. Jiří Kroha, "Socialistické výstavnictví" [Socialist Exhibition Design], *Architektura ČSR* 9, no. 11–12 (1950): 311–17; Karel Lodr, "Výstava jižních Čech v Soběslavi" [Exhibition of Southern Bohemia in Sobeslav], *Architektura ČSR* 9, no. 11–12 (1950): 318–19.
50. Lodr, "Výstava jižních Čech v Soběslavi" [Exhibition of Southern Bohemia in Sobeslav], 319.
51. Jiří Kroha to Vladimír Holík, May 28, 1949, JK, DO - A.B.C., MMB.
52. Jiří Kroha to Jiří Voženílek at Stavoprojekt, Dec. 30, 1949, JK, DO, MMB.
53. Jiří Kroha to Dr. Prof. Valouch, Sept. 29, 1949, JK, DO, MMB; Jiří Kroha to Josef Štěpánek, Dec. 23, 1951, JK, HAA, MMB; "Osobní posudek na s.Ladislava Skaunice" [Personal Reference for Comrade Ladislav Skaunice], Jan. 30, 1952, JK, HAA, MMB; Jiří Kroha

to Ředitelství Stavoprojektu [Stavoprojekt Administration], Apr. 4, 1950, JK, DO, MMB; Jiří Kroha to Ferdinand Balcárek, June 29, 1951, JK, HAA, MMB; Jiří Kroha to the Krajské komisi čís. 13 [Regional Commission no. 13] on behalf of Odelen Drbal, Nov. 3, 1949, JK, DO, MMB.

54. Jiří Kroha, “O socialistický realismus v naší architektuře” [On Socialist Realism in Our Architecture], *Architektura ČSR* 9, no. 1 (1950): 2–7; Jiří Kroha, “Na okraj architektonické řešení konkrétního projektu” [On the Brink of an Architectural Solution to a Concrete Problem], *Architektura ČSR* 9, no. 1 (1950): 8–9.

55. Jiří Kroha to the Ministry of Technology, Apr. 24, 1950, JK, DO, MMB.

56. Jiří Kroha to Otto Žáček, Dec. 21, 1948, JK, DO - A.B.C., MMB.

57. Jiří Kroha to the Ministry of Technology, Apr. 24, 1950, JK, DO, MMB.

58. Jiří Kroha to Jiří Voženílek at Stavoprojekt, Dec. 30, 1949, JK, DO, MMB. The transfers were scheduled to be effective January 1, 1950, but fewer employees left than were originally scheduled according to an employee list from January 10, 1951. See Jiří Kroha to Obvodní národní výbor v Praze 3 [District national committee in Prague 3], Jan. 10, 1951, JK, DO, MMB.

59. Jiří Kroha to Regional Architectural Atelier in Brno, Aug. 2, 1950, JK, DO, MMB; Kohout, Templ, and Zatloukal, eds., *Česká architektura - architektura XX.století. Díl I. Morava a Slezsko* [Czech Republic: 20th-Century Architecture, Part 1: Moravia and Silesia], 126.

60. Jiří Kroha to Obvodní národní výbor v Praze 5 [District National Committee in Prague 5], June 8, 1951, JK, DO, MMB; Jiří Kroha to Stavoprojekt, June 19, 1951, JK, DO, MMB.

61. There were two initial designs for the Morphology Pavilion, Phase I and Phase II. See illustrations in *Architektura ČSR* 10, no. 7–9 (1951): 207–13.

62. Jiří Kroha to OKD, n.p. – stavební oddělení [Ostrava-Karviná Regional Coal Mines (OKD), national enterprise – Building Department], Feb. 2, 1951, JK, DO, MMB.

63. Kroha, “Architektura zájmem a majetkem pracujícího lidu” [Architecture in the Interest and for the Enrichment of the Working People], 214–23. The source of red and yellow as the color palette is unclear. Martin Strakoš has suggested in conversation that the colors might mimic the red hue of the local brick.

64. Kroha, “Architektura zájmem a majetkem pracujícího lidu” [Architecture in the Interest and for the Enrichment of the Working People], 205–50.

65. *Ibid.*, 216.

66. *Ibid.*, 216, 232.

67. John N. Stevens, *Czechoslovakia at the Crossroads: The Economic Dilemmas of Communism in Postwar Czechoslovakia* (Boulder, CO: East European Monographs, 1985), 15–57.

68. “Informace o organizačním vývoji Mistrovského atelieru nár. Umělce Jiřího Krohy v Praze” [Information on the Organizational Development of the Master Atelier of National Artist Jiří Kroha in Prague], May 25, 1956, 1, ÚSBOV, carton 130, NA.

69. Alice Teichova, *The Czechoslovak Economy, 1918–1980* (London: Routledge, 1988), 136–37.

70. “Poznámky z jednání týkajícího se projektu Nová Dubnica” [Notes from the Discussion Concerning the Project for Nová Dubnica], Nov. 12, 1951, JK, VNSM-ND, MMB.

71. “Zpráva o jednání na KNV v Žilině” [Report from the Discussion at the Regional National Committee in Žilina], Dec. 3, 1951, JK, VNSM-ND, MMB.

72. Jiří Kroha and Ivan Ciporanov, “Návrh nového socialistického městečka na Slov-

ensku” [Project for a New Socialist Town in Slovakia], *Architektura ČSR* 11, no. 1–2 (1952): 35–45. An earlier version of the text is at the Brno archive; it has a few additional passages that were not published in *Architektura ČSR*, such as one about problems finding a fresh water source. See JK, folder: Směrný územní plán nového socialistického městečka “D”: průvodní zpráva [General City Plan of the New Socialist Town “D”: Accompanying Report], undated, 1–22, MMB.

73. Kroha and Ciporanov, “Návrh nového socialistického městečka na Slovensku” [Project for a New Socialist Town in Slovakia], 40.

74. JK, flat files, MMB. The first image is labeled “Overall view of the factory village of Robert Owen New Lanark, Copper Plate from 1823,” and the second, “View of the phalanstère designed according to the socialist ideas of Fourier. Such an institution should contain living, working and communal spaces for 400 families.” Strangely, the town pictured on the Owen board is not New Lanark or another recognizable project by Owen, although it looks like a nineteenth-century image. The source of the confusion is unknown, although Kroha’s ensemble designs for the blocks are closer to this rendering than to the actual town of New Lanark, with its configuration of mill and residential buildings along a riverbank. One assumes that Kroha was familiar with Owen’s ideas and his importance to nineteenth-century socialists even if he was mistaken as to the formal organization of his towns. For information on Owen, see Ian Donnachie, *Robert Owen: Owen of New Lanark and New Harmony* (East Linton, England: Tuckwell Press, 2000). For images of the Kroha boards, see Branislav Cvacho, *Jiří Kroha a Nová Dubnica* [Jiří Kroha and Nová Dubnica] (Nová Dubnica: City of Nová Dubnica, 2006), 20–21.

75. Historian Jonathan Beecher provides the best description of the phalanstery in his biography of Fourier. See Jonathan Beecher, *Charles Fourier: The Visionary and His World* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986), 241–58.

76. “Zpráva o jednání na KNV v Žilině” [Report from the Discussion at the Regional National Committee in Žilina], Dec. 3, 1951, JK, VNSM-ND, MMB.

77. Stavoprojekt studijní a typizační ustav [Study and Typification Institute] to Jiří Kroha, Sept. 24, 1952, JK, VNSM-ND, MMB.

78. Kroha and Ciporanov, “Návrh nového socialistického městečka na Slovensku” [Project for a New Socialist Town in Slovakia], 38.

79. ANU was hired to complete a design for a new House of Culture and some duplexes. The research can be tied directly to the design of the duplexes, which borrowed details from local examples. See JK, folder: Průzkum Dubnice nad Váhom [Research for Dubnica nad Váhom] (henceforth PDV), MMB.

80. “Průvodní zpráva” [Accompanying Report], Feb. 18, 1954, 1, JK, PDV, MMB.

81. The dilapidated state of the mansion can be seen in pictures of the area from the 1950s that are with the project documentation in the Brno museum archive.

82. “Průvodní zpráva” [Accompanying Report], 1.

83. Jiří Kroha to Pozemní stavby, n.p. Trenčín, June 5, 1953, JK, VNSM-ND, MMB.

84. “Likvidace býv. atelieru MANU J. Krohy” [Liquidation of J. Krohy’s Former Atelier MANU], Nov. 14, 1956, ÚŠBOV, carton 130, NA.

85. Residents are still fond of the work that Kroha did in Nová Dubnica. They held a celebration in his honor in 2006 and published a short history of the town’s design. See Cvacho, *Jiří Kroha a Nová Dubnica*.

86. Jiří Kroha to Stavoprojekt Prague, Mar. 20, 1952, JK, HAA, MMB.

87. Jiří Kroha, “Obraz kosmopolitismu ve stavebnictví a v architektuře” [The Image of Cosmopolitanism in Building and Architecture], *Architektura ČSR* 11 (1952): 104–24.

88. Those local architects were Anna Friedlová, Vladimír Meduna, Oldřich Slabý, Jiří Štursa, and Jaroslav Turek. Karel Pilát, “Výstavba vzorných sídlišť a jejich poslání” [The Construction of the Model Housing Developments and Their Mission], *Architektura ČSR* 7, no. 6–7 (1948): 201–5. See also Martin Strakoš, *Průvodce architekturou Ostravy / Ostrava Architecture Guide* (Ostrava: Národní památkový ústav, územní odborné pracoviště v Ostravě, 2009).

89. For a full set of drawings and reports related to Kroha’s design for the Bělský Les–Stalingrad neighborhood, see ÚSBOV, cartons 427–30, NA.

90. Jiří Kroha, “K základním otázkám první konference architektů v ČSR” [On the Fundamental Questions of the First Conference of Architects in Czechoslovakia], *Architektura ČSR* 11, no. 5–6 (1952): 139–50. See also, Strakoš, *Průvodce architekturou Ostravy / Ostrava Architecture Guide*, 369–83.

91. The lack of Kroha’s characteristic spires on the civic buildings may be one piece of evidence to back up Ivan Ciporanov’s claim that Kroha did little of the design work for this project. See Ivan Ciporanov to Minister Josef Kyselý, Jan. 11, 1955, 9, ÚSBOV, carton 130, NA. According to Ciporanov, the buildings were designed by Augusta Müllerová-Machoňová, one of the only female architects active in the early 1950s and the wife of architect Ladislav Machoň.

92. “Informace o organizačním vývoji Mistrovského atelieru národního umělce Jiřího Krohy v Praze” [Information on the Organizational Development of the Master Atelier of National Artist Jiří Kroha in Prague], 1–2.

93. ANU to Ivan Ciporanov, June 4, 1954, JK, DO - A.B.C., MMB.

94. Ivan Ciporanov to Minister Josef Kyselý, Jan. 11, 1955, 7.

95. *Ibid.*, 5–6.

96. *Ibid.*, 1, 5, 7.

97. Jiří Kroha to Ředitelství Státního ústavu pro rajonové plánování se sídlem v Praze [Administration of the State Institute for Regional Planning, Prague Office], Feb. 17, 1955, JK, HAA, MMB.

98. “1. Zápis o jednání komise jmenované Svazem architektů a ředitelem HSPÚ-MMH” [Minutes of the First Meeting of the Committee Named by the Union of Architects and the Director of the Central Administration of the Design Institutes (Stavoprojekt) of the Ministry of Community Enterprise], Mar. 19, 1955, 1, ÚSBOV, carton 130, NA.

99. “2. Zápis o jednání komise jmenované Svazem architektů a ředitelem HSPÚ-MMH” [Minutes of the Second Meeting of the Committee Named by the Union of Architects and the Central Administration of the State Design Institutes (Stavoprojekt) of the Ministry of Community Enterprise], Mar. 31, 1955, 1, ÚSBOV, carton 130, NA.

100. Neumann quoted in “Zápis ze společné schůze KSC a ROH MANU” [Minutes of the Collective Meeting of the Communist Party and Revolutionary Trade Unions of MANU], May 14, 1956, 3, ÚSBOV, carton 130, NA. Václav Roštlapil was the head architect in the master atelier. At the final employee meeting before the atelier’s closure, which Roštlapil attended but Kroha did not, Roštlapil was angrily portrayed as an equally demonic character in the office.

101. “These ke statute pobočky Mistrovský atelier národního umělce Ing. Arch. Jiřího Krohy” [Theses on the Statutes of the Branch Office, the Master Atelier of National Artist Jiří Kroha], 1.

102. The speech was published in a collection along with other material from the December 1954 conference. See *Diskuse o otázkách soudobé výstavby a architektury v SSSR* [Discussions on Questions of Contemporary Construction and Architecture in the

Soviet Union], trans. E. Bok and Z. Chalupová, 2 vols. (Prague: Výzkumný ústav výstavby a architektury, 1955). For an English translation, see Thomas P. Whitney, ed., *Khrushchev Speaks: Selected Speeches, Articles, and Press Conferences, 1949–1961* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1963), 153–92. At the time of the publication, Jiří Voženílek was director of the Research Institute of Construction and Architecture.

103. For example, architect Milan Brzák was one of the interior designers of the Hotel Internacionál in Prague. He spoke at the Club for Old Prague on March 17, 2003, about his experiences on the project and described a complete change in atmosphere “before” and “after” Khrushchev.

104. Kroha, “K základním otázkám první konference architektů v ČSR” [On the Fundamental Questions of the First Conference of Architects in Czechoslovakia], 139.

105. *Ibid.*, 150.

106. “Kapacita MANU potřebná mimo plánované akce” [Potential Needs at MANU Outside of Planned Actions], Apr. 28, 1955, ÚSBOV, carton 130, NA.

107. “Zápis ze společné schůze KSC a ROH MANU,” 6.

108. “Zpráva o výsledku průzkumu provedeného v MANU” [Report on the Results of the Investigation Undertaken at MANU], Aug. 11, 1955, 5, ÚSBOV, carton 130, NA.

109. “Zápis ze společné schůze KSC a ROH MANU,” 2.

110. *Ibid.*, 1 (quote), 3.

111. “Jmenný seznam zaměstnanců MANU s funkčním zařazením a platem” [List of MANU Employee Names with Functional Rank and Salary], July 11, 1955, ÚSBOV, carton 130, NA.

112. “Seznam stalých zaměstnanců MANU - jejich školní vzdělání a délka praxe” [List of Remaining Employees of MANU: Their Educational Qualifications and Duration of Work], Apr. 4, 1956, ÚSBOV, carton 130, NA.

113. “Zápis z porady ředitelů Státních projektových ústavů” [Minutes of the Meeting of the Directors of the State Design Institutes], Feb. 10, 1956, 2b, ÚSBOV, carton 124, NA.

114. *Ibid.*, 7a.

115. *Ibid.*

116. A catalogue was produced for the exhibition, although nothing was published from the public seminars. See Petišková, *Československý socialistický realismus*.

117. Josef Šanda, “Zlo zůstalo bez povšimnutí” [Evil Remained Unnoticed], *Architekt*, no. 2 (2003): 62; “Ve stínu sorely: umění a morálka” [In the Shadow of Sorela: Art and Morality], *Architekt*, no. 2 (2002): 62–66. The author, in attendance at both conferences, was one of the respondents. See Kimberly Elman [Zarecor], in “Ve stínu sorely: umění a morálka” [In the Shadow of Sorela: Art and Morality], 65.

118. Šanda, “Zlo zůstalo bez povšimnutí” [Evil Remained Unnoticed], 62.

119. “Ve stínu sorely: umění a morálka” [In the Shadow of Sorela: Art and Morality], 62–66.

120. Martin Kubelík, “Totalní myšlení” [Totalitarian Thinking], *Architekt*, no. 2 (2003): 62.

121. Šanda, “Zlo zůstalo bez povšimnutí” [Evil Remained Unnoticed], 62.

122. Catherine Cooke, “Beauty as a Route to ‘the Radiant Future’: Responses of Soviet Architecture,” *Journal of Design History* 10, no. 2 (1997): 143.

123. *Ibid.*, 147. Cooke is quoting from a contemporary book: N. Atarov, *Dvoretz Sovetov* (Moscow: Moskovskii rabochii, 1940), 42.

124. Cooke, “Beauty as a Route to ‘the Radiant Future,’” 138.

125. *Ibid.*, 143–44.

126. Kroha, “Socialistická architektura – Architektura míru” [Socialist Architecture: Architecture of Peace], 68–69.
127. Cooke, “Beauty as a Route to ‘the Radiant Future,’” 144.
128. “Zápis z porady ředitelů Státních projektových ústavů” [Minutes of the Meeting of the Directors of the State Design Institutes], Feb. 10, 1956, 2b.
129. Cooke, “Beauty as a Route to ‘the Radiant Future,’” 137.

CHAPTER 5. THE INDUSTRIALIZATION OF HOUSING

Epigraph: Oldřich Starý, “Veliké úkoly architektů v bojovém nástupu ke zprůmyslnění stavebnictví” [The Grand Tasks of Architects at the Advent of the Fight to Industrialize the Building Industry], *Architektura ČSR* 14, no. 9–10 (1955): 327. Translation by the author and Osamu Okamura.

1. Bohumil Kula is incorrectly referred to as Bohumír Kula in *Architektura ČSR* in 1947, illustrations 228–31. His article in *Architektura ČSR* from 1957 confirms the correct spelling; see Bohumil Kula, “Konstruktivní systém panelový” [The Panel Construction System], *Architektura ČSR* 16, no. 4–5 (1957): 172–75.

2. For a general overview of developments in this period, see Eva Pýchová, “Česká bytová výstavba v období 1945–1964” [Czech Residential Building, 1945–1964], *Umění* 54, no. 5 (2006): 420–32.

3. In one example, a T-series duplex (T42a/52) was built with prefabricated pieces, showing the desire to exchange old technology for new technology with no spatial or formal consequences. See František Jech, “Pokusný celomontovaný dvojdoměk v Brandýse nad Labem” [Experimental Fully Prefabricated Duplex in Brandýs nad Labem], *Architektura ČSR* 13, no. 5 (1954): 123.

4. Peter Lizon, “East Central Europe: The Unhappy Heritage of Communist Mass Housing,” *Journal of Architectural Education* 50, no. 2 (1996): 108.

5. Marie Benešová, Oldřich Starý, and Julius Šif, “K diskusi v komisi pro teorii a kritiku Svazu čs. Architektů” [On the Discussion of the Commission for Theory and Criticism of the Union of Czechoslovak Architects], *Architektura ČSR* 13, no. 2 (1954): 54–59. Šif was editor of *Sovětská architektura* from 1951 to 1955.

6. For more on the state of Soviet research, see Vladimír Červenka and Stanislav Sůva, *Průmyslová výroba stavebních konstrukcí* [The Industrial Production of Built Structures] (Prague: Ústav architektury a územního plánování, 1953); Vladimír Červenka and Jaromír Vašíček, *Industrializace bytové výstavby: technické studie* [The Industrialization of Housing: A Technical Study] (Prague: Ústav pro technické a ekonomické informace, 1958); K. Žukov, “O architektuře budov z velkých panelů” [On the Architecture of Buildings Made from Large Panels], *Sovětská architektura* 3, no. 1 (1953): 28–36.

7. For example, a delegation of thirty-three East German architects visited Prague in November 1955 as part of an exchange that sent thirty-three Czech and Slovak architects to Berlin. According to correspondence about the trip, the Germans asked specifically to learn more about the production and use of panels. Their itinerary included stops at research institutes and the building site where the first structural panel buildings in Prague were under construction at the time. Similar exchanges happened with Hungarian and Polish architects in 1954, and there were plans for Czech and Slovak architects to visit Bulgaria the following year. For documents related to the exchanges, see fond 867: Ministerstvo kultury [Ministry of Culture] (henceforth MK), carton 311, Národní archiv [National Archives] (henceforth NA), Prague, Czech Republic. Additional documentation of research trips in 1957–1958 can be found in fond 976:

Státní výbor pro výstavbu [State Committee for Construction], (henceforth SVV), cartons 138–39, NA.

8. See, for example, Colin Davies, *The Prefabricated Home* (London: Reaktion Books, 2005); Gilbert Herbert, *The Dream of the Factory-Made House: Walter Gropius and Konrad Wachsmann* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1984); Raphaëlle Saint-Pierre, “The Camus System, Le Havre, 1949–1951,” *Docomomo US Newsletter* (summer 2008): 3; Robert Weddle, “Housing and Technological Reform in Interwar France: The Case of the Cité de la Muette,” *Journal of Architectural Education* 54, no. 3 (2001): 167–75.

9. Lustron houses caught the attention of the Czechoslovak consulate in Cleveland in 1949. The consulate sent the Ministry of Foreign Affairs a newspaper article and a summary of information about the houses, which were invented in 1946 and marketed from 1948 to 1950. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs then forwarded the information to the Ministry of Technology in February 1949; see fond 996: Ministerstvo techniky [Ministry of Technology] (henceforth, MT), carton 430, NA. See also Thomas T. Fethers, *The Lustron Home: The History of a Postwar Prefabricated Housing Experiment* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 2002).

10. Jiří Kroha's objections are discussed in chapter 4. See also Benešová, Starý, and Šif, “K diskusi v komisi pro teorii a kritiku Svazu čs. Architektů” [On the Discussion of the Commission for Theory and Criticism of the Union of Czechoslovak Architects],” 54–59; Václav Havránek, “K architektonické problematice montovaných staveb” [On the Architectural Problems of Prefabricated Buildings], *Architektura ČSR* 13, no. 2 (1954): 42–52; Karel Janů, “K otázce montovaných bytových staveb” [On the Question of Prefabricated Housing], *Architektura ČSR* 13, no. 2 (1954): 35–41. These articles were published together in *Architektura ČSR*, when the Institute of Prefabricated Buildings published the first prototypes in 1954.

11. Herbert, *Dream of the Factory-Made House*, 43, 44, 48.

12. *Ibid.*, 48–49.

13. Instead of housing, the buildings ended up being used for various purposes, including a prison, a transfer station for French Jews during World War II, and an army barracks; all but one building were demolished in 1976. See Weddle, “Housing and Technological Reform in Interwar France,” 167–75.

14. Herbert, *Dream of the Factory-Made House*, 49–51.

15. Weddle, “Housing and Technological Reform in Interwar France,” 173–74.

16. Herbert, *Dream of the Factory-Made House*, 51. According to Herbert, this shift was due not only to Nazi ideology but also to the sustained interest among modern architects in the house.

17. For useful guides to these projects, see Michal Kohout, Vladimír Šlapeta, and Stephan Templ, eds., *Prague: 20th-Century Architecture* (Vienna: Springer, 1999); Michal Kohout, Stephan Templ, and Pavel Zatloukal, eds., *Česká architektura - architektura XX.století. Díl I. Morava a Slezsko* [Czech Republic: 20th-Century Architecture, Part 1; Moravia and Silesia] (Prague: Zlatý řez, 2005); Radovan Lipus and David Vávra, *Šumná města, sv. 1* [Hidden Cities, vol. 1] (Brno: Petrov, 2002); Radovan Lipus and David Vávra, *Šumná města, sv. 2* [Hidden Cities, vol. 2] (Brno: Petrov, 2003).

18. The city of Zlín has created an online catalogue of Baťa housing types. See “In the Steps of Zlín Architecture: Baťa Villas and Family Houses in Zlín,” <http://www.zlin.eu/en/page/32317.in-the-steps-of-zlin-architecture/> (accessed Apr. 7, 2010).

19. See Kimberly Elman [Zarecor], “Garden Cities and Company Towns: Tomáš Baťa and the Formation of Zlín, Czechoslovakia,” *Harriman Review* 12, no. 4 (2000): 25–35.

20. *Zlín - město v zahradách / Zlín: City in Gardens* (Zlín: Statutární město Zlín,

2005), illustrations 59–68; Zdeněk Pokluda, *Ze Zlína do světa - příběh Tomáše Bati / From Zlín into the World: The Story of Thomas Bat'a* (Zlín: Thomas Bata Foundation; Státní okresní archiv Zlín, 2004), 20–21.

21. See Paul Devinat, "Working Conditions in a Rationlised Undertaking, Part II," *International Labour Review* 21, no. 2 (Feb. 1930): 180–81.

22. Pokluda, *Ze Zlína do světa / From Zlín into the World*, 46.

23. See Alois Kubiček, "Nové zahradní čtvrti ve Zlíně" [The New Garden District in Zlín], *Architektura ČSR* 2, no. [10?] (1940): 286.

24. Vladimír Karfík, *Architekt si spomína* [An Architect Remembers] (Bratislava: Spolok architektov Slovenska, 1993), 44–89. He was at Holabird & Root in 1927–1928 and with Wright in 1929.

25. Karfík, *Architekt si spomína* [An Architect Remembers], 25–32.

26. *Ibid.*, 92–93.

27. On the family and the company's expansion, see Tomas Bata and Sonja Sinclair, *Bata: Shoemaker to the World* (Toronto: Stoddart, 1990). New information about Jan Bata's wartime activities recently led to the overturning of a 1947 verdict against him for Nazi collaboration. See Rob Cameron, "Prague Court Overturns 1947 Verdict against 'Shoe King' Jan Antonin Bata," June 26, 2007, Český rozhlas [Czech Radio] International Section Archive, <http://www.radio.cz/en/article/92786> (accessed Mar. 16, 2010).

28. Jean-Louis Cohen, "Zlín: An Industrial Republic," *Rassegna* 19, no. 70 (1997): 42–45; Jane Pavitt, "The Bata Project: A Social and Industrial Experiment," *Twentieth-Century Architecture*, no. 1, special issue (summer 1994): 31–44; Shannon Ricketts, "Batawa: An Experiment in International Standardization," *Society for the Study of Architecture in Canada Bulletin* 18, no. 3–4 (1993): 80–87.

29. Eric J. Jenkins, "Utopia, Inc.: Czech Culture and Bata Shoe Company Architecture and Garden Cities," *Thresholds* 18 (1999): 64.

30. Cohen, "Zlín," 44.

31. Kohout, Templ, and Zatloukal, eds., *Česká architektura - architektura XX.století. Díl I. Morava a Slezsko* [Czech Republic: 20th-Century Architecture, Part 1; Moravia and Silesia], entry by Petr Všečka, 187.

32. Kubiček, "Nové zahradní čtvrti ve Zlíně" [The New Garden District in Zlín], 278.

33. Kohout, Templ, and Zatloukal, eds., *Česká architektura - architektura XX.století. Díl I. Morava a Slezsko* [Czech Republic: 20th-Century Architecture, Part 1; Moravia and Silesia], entry by Petr Všečka, 187.

34. Little is known about Swedlund, who is incorrectly referred to in the Bata literature as Svedlund. In 2006, a Swedish journalist found out that he had never visited Zlín or told his colleagues in Sweden that he had won the competition. He worked for another architect for his whole career and died in Stockholm in 1985. See Lars Schmidt, "Utopia," *Forum: Quarterly Review of Nordic Architecture and Design* 1 (spring 2006): 100–111. Thanks to Adam Gebrian for suggesting this source.

35. Kohout, Templ, and Zatloukal, eds., *Česká architektura - architektura XX.století. Díl I. Morava a Slezsko* [Czech Republic: 20th-Century Architecture, Part 1; Moravia and Silesia], entry by Petr Všečka, 189.

36. *Ibid.*, 188; Kubiček, "Nové zahradní čtvrti ve Zlíně" [The New Garden District in Zlín], 284. The experimental finish does not survive.

37. Kohout, Templ, and Zatloukal, eds., *Česká architektura - architektura XX.století. Díl I. Morava a Slezsko* [Czech Republic: 20th-Century Architecture, Part 1; Moravia and Silesia], entry by Petr Všečka, 189.

38. Kubíček, “Nové zahradní čtvrti ve Zlíně” [The New Garden District in Zlín], 285.
39. Kohout, Templ, and Zatloukal, eds., *Česká architektura - architektura XX.století. Díl I. Morava a Slezsko* [Czech Republic: 20th-Century Architecture, Part 1; Moravia and Silesia], entry by Petr Všečka, 189.
40. Other prototypes were built on the same street, including a 140-square-meter (1,500-square-foot) three-bedroom house by Karfik from 1935 that was not part of the competition. See *ibid.*, 187–89; Kubíček, “Nové zahradní čtvrti ve Zlíně” [The New Garden District in Zlín], 277–88.
41. Kohout, Templ, and Zatloukal, eds., *Česká architektura - architektura XX.století. Díl I. Morava a Slezsko* [Czech Republic: 20th-Century Architecture, Part 1; Moravia and Silesia], entry by Petr Všečka, 188.
42. Le Corbusier, *Oeuvre complète, 1934–1938* [The Complete Works] (Zurich: Dr. H. Girsberger, 1939), 38–39.
43. *Ibid.*, 116–21, 170–71.
44. Cohen, “Zlín,” 43.
45. Jiří Voženílek, “Nová výstavba Zlína” [The New Construction of Zlín], *Architektura ČSR* 6, no. 3 (1947): 69. Voženílek claimed that between three hundred and six hundred new housing units were completed in Zlín every year from 1929 to 1939.
46. Bata and Sinclair, *Bata*, 49–73. Tomáš Baťa’s widow returned to Czechoslovakia from Canada in 1939 so that the family could keep the business out of the hands of the Nazis, although German overseers were added to the board of directors.
47. Voženílek, “Nová výstavba Zlína” [The New Construction of Zlín], 69. It is not clear if the 140 were recently built or in older neighborhoods.
48. Zlín research institutes were safe havens for many academics after the Nazis closed Czechoslovak universities in November 1939. The Faculty of Management and Economics at the Tomáš Baťa University in Zlín claims that the closing of the universities was “a boon to illegal research and to university-level teaching, bearing its fruit in the post-war industrial development and build up of research capacity,” especially in the rubber, plastic, and leather-working industries in Zlín. See “Faculty: History and Relationship with the Zlín Region,” Faculty of Management and Economics, Tomáš Baťa University in Zlín, http://web.fame.utb.cz/?id=o_o_o&lang=en&type=o (accessed Mar. 16, 2010).
49. For a timeline of the institute, see Jaroslav Koželuha and Matylda Dufková, “Chronologický vývoj panelových domů od roku 1940 do roku 1960 v práci Výzkumného ústavu pozemních staveb Gottwaldov” [The Chronological Development of Panel Buildings from 1940 to 1960 in the Work of the Research Institute for Buildings in Gottwaldov], *Stavební listy* 5, special issue (1999): 17.
50. *Ibid.*, 15.
51. Petr Vasulka et al., “Biography: Miroslav Drofa,” <http://drofa.com/architekt/pages/en/zivotopis/zivotopis.html> (accessed Mar. 16, 2010).
52. Koželuha and Dufková, “Chronologický vývoj panelových domů od roku 1940 do roku 1960 v práci Výzkumného ústavu pozemních staveb Gottwaldov” [The Chronological Development of Panel Buildings from 1940 to 1960 in the Work of the Research Institute for Buildings in Gottwaldov], 15.
53. *Ibid.*; Voženílek, “Nová výstavba Zlína” [The New Construction of Zlín], 84.
54. Koželuha and Dufková, “Chronologický vývoj panelových domů od roku 1940 do roku 1960 v práci Výzkumného ústavu pozemních staveb Gottwaldov” [The Chronological Development of Panel Buildings from 1940 to 1960 in the Work of the Research Institute for Buildings in Gottwaldov], 17.

55. Voženílek, "Nová výstavba Zlína" [The New Construction of Zlín], 69.
56. See F. L. Gahura, L. Hornáková, and J. Gahura, *Frantisek Lýdie Gahura, 1891–1958: projekty, realizace a socharské dílo* [Frantisek Lýdie Gahura, 1891–1958: Projects, Buildings, and Sculptures] (Zlín: Krajská galerie výtvarného umění; Brno: Muzeum města Brna, 2006); Karfík, *Architekt si pomíná* [An Architect Remembers].
57. Voženílek, "Nová výstavba Zlína" [The New Construction of Zlín], 69–72.
58. *Ibid.*, 73–78.
59. *Ibid.*, 74.
60. Karfík, *Architekt si pomíná* [An Architect Remembers], 140–41; Vlasta Štursova, "Zlín—první dokončené byty zLP" [Zlín – The First Completed Apartments of the Two-Year Plan], *Architektura ČSR* 6, no. 6 (1947): 193; Voženílek, "Nová výstavba Zlína" [The New Construction of Zlín], 81.
61. Kohout, Templ, and Zatloukal, eds., *Česká architektura - architektura XX.století. Díl I. Morava a Slezsko* [Czech Republic: 20th-Century Architecture, Part 1; Moravia and Silesia], entry by Petr Vešetečka, 192.
62. Voženílek, "Nová výstavba Zlína" [The New Construction of Zlín], 81.
63. Kohout, Templ, and Zatloukal, eds., *Česká architektura - architektura XX.století. Díl I. Morava a Slezsko* [Czech Republic: 20th-Century Architecture, Part 1; Moravia and Silesia], entry by Petr Vešetečka, 191.
64. Karfík, *Architekt si pomíná* [An Architect Remembers], 140.
65. Personal correspondence with Martin Strakoš, June 2006.
66. Kohout, Templ, and Zatloukal, eds., *Česká architektura—architektura XX.století. Díl I. Morava a Slezsko* [Czech Republic: 20th-Century Architecture, Part 1; Moravia and Silesia], entry by Petr Vešetečka, 191. On the "tower in a park" concept, see Eric Paul Mumford, "The 'Tower in a Park' in America: Theory and Practice, 1920–1960," *Planning Perspectives* 10, no. 1 (Jan. 1995): 17–41.
67. Voženílek, "Nová výstavba Zlína" [The New Construction of Zlín], 80.
68. Kohout, Templ, and Zatloukal, eds., *Česká architektura - architektura XX.století. Díl I. Morava a Slezsko* [Czech Republic: 20th-Century Architecture, Part 1; Moravia and Silesia], entry by Petr Vešetečka, 191.
69. *Ibid.*, 193; Jiří Voženílek, "Obytné stavby z LP v Zlíně" [Residential Building during the Two-Year Plan in Zlín], *Architektura ČSR* 7, no. 7 (1948): 219–22.
70. Koželuha and Dufková, "Chronologický vývoj panelových domů od roku 1940 do roku 1960 v práci Výzkumného ústavu pozemních staveb Gottwaldov" [The Chronological Development of Panel Buildings from 1940 to 1960 in the Work of the Research Institute for Buildings in Gottwaldov], 15.
71. Voženílek, "Nová výstavba Zlína" [The New Construction of Zlín], 84.
72. Koželuha and Dufková, "Chronologický vývoj panelových domů od roku 1940 do roku 1960 v práci Výzkumného ústavu pozemních staveb Gottwaldov" [The Chronological Development of Panel Buildings from 1940 to 1960 in the Work of the Research Institute for Buildings in Gottwaldov], 15; Voženílek, "Nová výstavba Zlína" [The New Construction of Zlín], 84. *Stavební listy* incorrectly refers to Kula as Kukla.
73. "Kandidátka výboru Svazu architektů – Voženílek" [Candidate for the Board of the Architects' Union: Voženílek], Mar. 22, 1953, ÚKPK, carton 637, NA.
74. See "Úvod" [Introduction], unpaginated, ÚSBOV, finding aid, NA. The department then expanded to include nationwide projects and remained in the Ministry of the Interior until the fall of 1953.
75. The Ministry of Technology [Ministerstvo techniky] was disbanded on Decem-

ber 20, 1950, and four new ministries were formed: the Ministry of Heavy Industry [Ministerstvo těžkého průmyslu], Ministry of Light Industry [Ministerstvo lehkého průmyslu], Ministry of Food Industry [Ministerstvo potravinářského průmyslu], and Ministry of Building Industry [Ministerstvo stavebního průmyslu]. In January 1953, the Ministry of Building Materials [Ministerstvo stavebního hmot] was established, although it would only exist for nine months. The former minister of technology, Emanuel Šlechta, became the minister of building industry in this new configuration; he served in that capacity until 1956, when he became head of the State Committee for Construction [Státní výbor pro výstavbu]. He was a specialist on American mass production and had lived in the United States in the 1920s. He committed suicide alongside his wife in 1960. See Josef Tomeš, *Český biografický slovník XX. století*, vol. 3 (Prague: Paseka, 1999), 277.

76. “Materiál pro schůzi Vládního výboru pro výstavbu: opatření pro zlepšení spolupráce mezi projektovými organizacemi” [Material for the Meeting of the Government Committee for Construction: Provisions for Improvement in the Cooperation between Design Organizations], May 28, 1953, fond 315: Úřad předsednictva vlády - vládní výbor pro výstavbu [Office of the Prime Minister, Government Committee for Construction] (henceforth VVV), carton 1, NA. The report specifies state design offices, construction departments of manufacturing enterprises, and representatives of construction equipment and machine fabricators as targets for this initiative.

77. See “Zápis z I.schůze vládního výboru pro výstavbu konané dne 29.VI.1953” [Minutes from the first meeting of the Government Committee for Construction on June 29, 1953], June 29, 1953, VVV, carton 1, NA. Although secrecy was requested at the first meeting, the nature and extent of this confidentiality is unclear. The committee does not appear on the ministry lists from this period, and it is not mentioned in *Architektura ČSR*. Its successor, the State Committee for Construction (Státní výbor pro výstavbu), was led by a minister-president (*minister-předseda*) and appeared on the ministry list after 1956, when its activities were more publicized.

78. The committee was created by a decree in July 1952, but the first planning meeting was not held until May the following year and the first meeting was not until June.

79. “Zápis z I.schůze vládního výboru pro výstavbu konané dne 29.VI.1953” [Minutes from the first meeting of the Government Committee for Construction on June 29, 1953].

80. Martin R. Myant, *The Czechoslovak Economy, 1948–1988: The Battle for Economic Reform* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 64.

81. Otakar Nový, “Čtvrtstoleté jubileum založení Stavoprojektu” [The Twenty-Fifth Anniversary of the Establishment of Stavoprojekt], *Architektura ČSR* 32 (1973): 488.

82. Ibid. See also, “Úvod” [Introduction], unpaginated, ÚSBOV, finding aid, NA. In June 1953, Stavoprojekt was transferred from the Ministry of Building Industry to the Ministry of the Interior. Then in October 1953, together with the Department of Central Investment, it was moved again to the new Ministry of Local Enterprise (Ministerstvo místního hospodářství). Minister Josef Kyselý would lead the Ministry of Local Enterprise until 1958. He had also been the head of the short-lived Ministry of Building Materials (Ministerstvo stavebních hmot) in 1953.

83. Janů, “K otázce montovaných bytových staveb” [On the Question of Prefabricated Housing], 35.

84. Housing was the first construction sector to adopt typification widely. More than 90 percent of new housing units in 1950 were in T-series buildings, although almost half were small cottages for workers. In the same year, only 8 percent of all buildings

were built according to types; according to Voženílek, the goal was 25 percent by 1953. See Jiří Voženílek, "Typisace a stavitelství" [Typification and the Building Industry] *Architektura ČSR* 11, no. 7–9 (1952): 270.

85. J. Ledvina, "Prefabrikované architektonické prvky na stavbě" [Prefabricated Architectural Elements for Buildings], *Architektura ČSR* 11, no. 7–9 (1952): 265–66. The pieces were attached to the buildings with metal fasteners that used holes cast into the pieces at the factory.

86. Starý, "Veliké úkoly architektů v bojovém nástupu ke zprůmyslnění stavebnictví" [The Grand Tasks of Architects at the Advent of the Fight to Industrialize the Building Industry], 327–30.

87. Quoted in *Stavebnictví včera, dnes a zítra* [The Building Industry, Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow] (Prague: Stavební informační středisko, 1973), 13.

88. Tomeš, *Český biografický slovník XX. století*, vol. 3, 277. Šlechta trained as a mechanical engineer and taught at the Czech Technical University in Prague from 1935 to 1939 and again from 1945 to 1948. He wrote a number of books on American industrial practices; see, for example, Emanuel Šlechta, *Americký industrialismus* [American Industrialism] (Prague: Prometheus, 1928); Emanuel Šlechta, *Energie a práce v americkém industrialismu* [Energy and Work in American Industrialism] (Prague: Prometheus, 1929); and Emanuel Šlechta, *Srovnávání průmyslových podniků* [A Comparison of Industrial Enterprises] (Prague: Orbis, 1946).

89. Jiří Voženílek, "Deset let výstavby" [Ten Years of Construction], *Architektura ČSR* 14, no. 5 (1955): 185.

90. See Starý, "Veliké úkoly architektů v bojovém nástupu ke zprůmyslnění stavebnictví" [The Grand Tasks of Architects at the Advent of the Fight to Industrialize the Building Industry], 328; Voženílek, "Deset let výstavby" [Ten Years of Construction], 184–85.

91. *Stavebnictví včera, dnes a zítra* [The Building Industry, Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow], 18.

92. Koželuha and Dufková, "Chronologický vývoj panelových domů od roku 1940 do roku 1960 v práci Výzkumného ústavu pozemních staveb Gottwaldov" [The Chronological Development of Panel Buildings from 1940 to 1960 in the Work of the Research Institute for Buildings in Gottwaldov], 16.

93. Červenka and Šůva, *Průmyslová výroba stavebních konstrukcí* [The Industrial Production of Built Structures], 65.

94. Koželuha and Dufková, "Chronologický vývoj panelových domů od roku 1940 do roku 1960 v práci Výzkumného ústavu pozemních staveb Gottwaldov" [The Chronological Development of Panel Buildings from 1940 to 1960 in the Work of the Research Institute for Buildings in Gottwaldov], 17. The Institute of Prefabricated Buildings would continue under various monikers until it was privatized in 1992. Today the company is known as Centrum stavebního inženýrství [CSI, or the Center for Building Engineering] and remains in Prague, with a branch in Zlín. One of its specialties is consulting on the renovation and rehabilitation of panel buildings. See <http://www.csias.cz/> (accessed Mar. 16, 2010).

95. Otakar Nový, "In memoriam profesora Jiřího Voženíleka" [In Memory of Professor Jiří Voženílek], *Architektura ČSR* 46, no. 4 (1987): 346; Josef Pechar, *Československá architektura, 1945–1977* [Czechoslovak Architecture, 1945–1977] (Prague: Odeon, 1979), 25.

96. See Zdeněk Lakomý, "Úkoly výzkumného ústavu pro stavebnictví a architekturu ve vztahu k architektonické tvorbě" [The Work of the Research Institute for Build-

ing and Architecture in Relation to Architectural Production], *Architektura ČSR* 10, no. 7–9 (1951): 285–87; Pechar, *Československá architektura, 1945–1977*, 25n92. It was the Research Institute for Building and Architecture [Výzkumný ústav pro stavebnictví a architektura] from July 1951 until January 1952.

97. Pechar, *Československá architektura, 1945–1977*, 24–25.

98. Voženílek, “Typisace a stavitelství” [Typification and the Building Industry], 267–70. The illustrations are curious, because the article does not refer to them and they appear to be extra images from the article by J. Ledvina that precedes Voženílek’s, to the extent that Ledvina is listed as the author of the objects shown in the pictures; see Ledvina, “Prefabrikované architektonické prvky na stavbě” [Prefabricated Architectural Elements for Buildings], 265–66. One possibility was that the editors were attempting to underplay the content of his article for the political censors.

99. Voženílek, “Typisace a stavitelství” [Typification and the Building Industry], 268.

100. *Ibid.*, 269.

101. *Ibid.*, 268.

102. *Ibid.*, 270.

103. Nový, “In memoriam profesora Jiřího Voženíleka” [In Memory of Professor Jiří Voženílek], 346–47. He also served as deputy minister of the State Committee for Construction from 1956 to 1960, taught at the Technical University in Prague for many years, and became head architect for the City of Prague in the 1960s. Along with Jiří Novotný and Jiří Hruža, he worked on the first Prague master plan in 1967.

104. Červenka and Sůva, *Průmyslová výroba stavebních konstrukcí* [The Industrial Production of Built Structures]. Although the publication was produced as a book, it was not for public consumption. The cover reads “only for the internal needs of design and planning enterprises.” The only known surviving copy is at the National Library in Prague.

105. Marie-Jeanne Dumont and Françoise Fromonot, “Le Logement” [Housing], *Architecture d’aujourd’hui* 67 (Feb. 1996): 86.

106. Saint-Pierre, “Camus System, Le Havre,” 3.

107. “Francouzský montovaný panelový obytný dům” [French Residential Building from Prefabricated Panels], *Architektura ČSR* 15, no. 3 (1956): 167. The text indicated that it was translated from an article in a French journal, *Annals de l’Institut Technique du Bâtiment et des Travaux Publics*, no. 7–8 (1955). Although the company whose work is featured in the article is not named, the method described was the Coignet system. Gyula Sebestyén, *Large-Panel Buildings*, trans. A. Frankovszky (Budapest: Publishing House of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, 1965), 135. The Hungarian edition of this work was published in 1960.

108. M. Raymond Camus, “Fabrication industrielle de huit logements par jour dans la région Parisienne” [Industrial Fabrication of Eight Dwelling Units per Day in the Paris Region], *Annals de l’Institut Technique du Bâtiment et des Travaux Publics* 101 (May 1956): 428–53.

109. F. Stránecký, “Francouzské panelové domy ‘Camus’” [“Camus” French Panel Buildings], *Architektura ČSR* 16, no. 6 (1957): 314. The author based his short text on Camus, “Fabrication industrielle de huit logements par jour dans la région Parisienne” [Industrial Fabrication of Eight Dwelling Units per Day in the Paris Region], 428–53.

110. Stránecký, “Francouzské panelové domy, ‘Camus’” [“Camus” French Panel Buildings], 314.

111. Červenka and Vašíček, *Industrialisace bytové výstavby* [The Industrialization

of Housing], 245–55. See also “Procédé Coignet: Béton Préfabrique en Usine” [The Coignet Process: Concrete Prefabricated in a Factory], *Techniques & Architecture*, no. 5 (June–July 1962): 152–53.

112. Červenka and Vašíček, *Industrialisace bytové výstavby* [The Industrialization of Housing], 245.

113. For example, these authors claim incorrectly that the Soviets exported French panel technology to the Eastern Bloc in the 1960s. See Dumont and Fromonot, “Le Logement” [Housing], 86.

114. Žukov, “O architektuře budov z velkých panelů” [On the Architecture of Buildings Made from Large Panels], 28–36; Červenka and Vašíček, *Industrialisace bytové výstavby* [The Industrialization of Housing], 243–44. For a contemporary overview of research into large block, precast, and panel construction, see Sebestyén, *Large-Panel Buildings*.

115. Saint-Pierre, “Camus System, Le Havre,” 3; Dumont and Fromonot, “Le Logement” [Housing], 86.

116. Červenka and Sůva, *Průmyslová výroba stavebních konstrukcí* [The Industrial Production of Built Structures], 10.

117. M. Vostrosablin, “Úkoly a organisace stavebního podniku hl. m. Prahy, kom. Podnik” [The Work and Organization of the Building Enterprise of the City of Prague Public Works], *Architektura ČSR* 9, no. 7–8 (1950): 207–8.

118. František Jech, *Rodinný dům v kooperativní stavbě (ekonomisace, simplifikace a industrialisace nízkých staveb)* [The Family House in Cooperative Construction: Economization, Simplification, and Industrialization of Low-Rise Buildings] (Prague: Ed. Grégr a syna, 1946).

119. “Nové sídliště ‘Solidarita’ v Praze-Strašnicích” [The New Housing Development “Solidarita” in Prague-Strašnice], *Architektura ČSR* 6, no. 10 (1947): 312. The other architects on the project were Hanuš Majer and Karel Storch.

120. Jech, *Rodinný dům v kooperativní stavbě* [The Family House in Cooperative Construction], 33, 35.

121. Karel Storch, “Bytové stavebnictví v Dánsku a Švédsku” [Housing Production in Denmark and Sweden], *Architektura ČSR* 6, no. 1 (1947): 26–27; Karel Storch, “Mezinárodní shoda v bytovém standardu” [The International Consensus in the Housing Standard], *Architektura ČSR* 6, no. 5 (1947): 140–41.

122. Jiří Voženílek, *Bydlení v Československu: přehled bytové výstavby od roku 1945 / Housing in Czechoslovakia: An Overview of Housing Construction since 1945* (Prague: Nakl. výtvarných umělců, 1958), 57.

123. The image of the cooperative housing project in Praestehaven, Denmark, is not connected to any particular article but appears on the first page of *Architektura ČSR* 6, no. 5 (1947): 133. Also, see examples from Denmark, Norway, and Finland in Storch, “Mezinárodní shoda v bytovém standardu” [The International Consensus in the Housing Standard], 140–41.

124. “Nové sídliště ‘Solidarita’ v Praze-Strašnicích” [The New Housing Development “Solidarita” in Prague-Strašnice], 310–13.

125. In October and November 1949, Jech and staff at the Ministry of Technology and the City Building Enterprise wrote several preliminary reports describing the project and their goals for it, as well as its cost and feasibility. In these reports, they elaborated on some of the details and concluded that the project was feasible. The buildings would possibly be more expensive than Jech anticipated, and before giving a more accu-

rate cost estimate, he needed to obtain more information about the amount of reinforcing steel required. See MT, carton 430, NA.

126. František Jech, “Nájemný dům ve vysoké stavbě” [Rental Apartments in Tall Buildings], *Architektura ČSR* 9, no. 7–8 (1950): 171–206.

127. Červenka and Sůva, *Průmyslová výroba stavebních konstrukcí* [The Industrial Production of Built Structures], 65.

128. Besides Karfík’s recollection of the project, there is no documentation of the building. See Karfík, *Architekt si spomína* [An Architect Remembers], 145.

129. Karfík, *Architekt si spomína* [An Architect Remembers], 145 (quote).

130. Havránek, “K architektonické problematice montovaných staveb” [On the Architectural Problems of Prefabricated Buildings], 42–52. Earlier research in 1952–1953 on what became the BA system was referenced in a 1961 book; see Karel Storch, *New Techniques and Architecture in Czechoslovakia* (Prague: Union of Czechoslovak Architects, 1961), 46.

131. Sebestyén, *Large-Panel Buildings*, 54–55, 92.

132. Georgi Turzunov, “Obtyný dom z predpätých panelov typu BA v Bratislave” [Residential Building from Pre-Stressed Panels of the BA Type in Bratislava], *Architektura ČSR* 16, no. 4–5 (1957): 176–79.

133. “Přehlídka nejlepších projektů výstavby 1955” [Review of the Best Projects of 1955], *Architektura ČSR* 15, no. 1 (1956): 43.

134. Storch, *New Techniques and Architecture in Czechoslovakia*, 46–53.

135. For examples of later BA system buildings, see *ibid.*, 50–54.

136. Červenka and Sůva, *Průmyslová výroba stavebních konstrukcí* [The Industrial Production of Built Structures], 10.

137. *Stavebnictví včera, dnes a zítra* [The Building Industry, Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow], 13.

138. Another example was a T-series duplex (T42a) František Jech built in 1954 using prefabricated pieces but to the same specifications as the traditionally built type. See Jech, “Pokusný celomontovaný dvojdomek v Brandýse nad Labem” [Experimental Fully Prefabricated Duplex in Brandýs nad Labem], 123.

139. Červenka and Sůva, *Průmyslová výroba stavebních konstrukcí* [The Industrial Production of Built Structures], 53–55; Janů, “K otázce montovaných bytových staveb” [On the Question of Prefabricated Housing], 35–41; Erich Kohn, “Architektura montovaných bytových staveb” [The Architecture of Prefabricated Apartment Buildings], *Architektura ČSR* 13, no. 2 (1954): 52–54.

140. Červenka and Sůva, *Průmyslová výroba stavebních konstrukcí* [The Industrial Production of Built Structures], 53.

141. *Ibid.*, 72.

142. All four systems, as well as the BA system in Bratislava, are discussed in detail again in *Architektura ČSR* 16, no. 4–5 (1957): 159–82.

143. Kohn, “Architektura montovaných bytových staveb” [The Architecture of Prefabricated Apartment Buildings], 52; Storch, *New Techniques and Architecture in Czechoslovakia*, 13–23.

144. Prager’s curtain wall system project, from 1959, was the Molecular Biology Building for the Technical University in Prague. See Karel Prager and Radomíra Sedláková, *Karel Prager: Prostor v čase* [Karel Prager: Space in Time] (Prague: Blok architektů and Architektonické studio GAMA, 2001).

145. Janů, “K otázce montovaných bytových staveb” [On the Question of Prefabri-

cated Housing], 40–41. This design based on the T16 is sometimes referred to as the Janů type. Pýchová, “Česká bytová výstavba v období 1945–1964” [Czech Residential Building, 1945–1964], 425–26.

146. Červenka and Sůva, *Průmyslová výroba stavebních konstrukcí* [The Industrial Production of Built Structures], 55–64.

147. Koželuha and Dufková, “Chronologický vývoj panelových domů od roku 1940 do roku 1960 v práci Výzkumného ústavu pozemních staveb Gottwaldov” [The Chronological Development of Panel Buildings from 1940 to 1960 in the Work of the Research Institute for Buildings in Gottwaldov], 16.

148. Sebestyén, *Large-Panel Buildings*, 96.

149. *Ibid.*, 130.

150. Correspondence in the Ministry of Technology files shows that Janů was negotiating to put the “living core” concept into production as early as 1948. MT, carton 430, NA.

151. See Voženílek, *Bydlení v Československu / Housing in Czechoslovakia*, 31–32.

152. On global efforts to reduce the cost, weight, and construction time of panel buildings, see Sebestyén, *Large-Panel Buildings*, 122–50.

153. Storch, *New Techniques and Architecture in Czechoslovakia*, 37–39.

154. *Ibid.*, 38.

155. A set of construction drawings for the G57 type can be found in SVV, cartons 212–14, NA.

156. Storch, *New Techniques and Architecture in Czechoslovakia*, 25.

157. Kula, “Konstruktivní systém panelový” [The Panel Construction System], 172–75; Storch, *New Techniques and Architecture in Czechoslovakia*, 24–25.

158. For a full analysis of G-building construction costs, see Červenka and Sůva, *Průmyslová výroba stavebních konstrukcí* [The Industrial Production of Built Structures], 53–83. The authors also discuss the contemporary situation in the Soviet Union and make the point that the Soviets often used systems one and two, more than the Czechs and Slovaks in 1953, but they were still developing the technology for systems three and four.

159. Nový, “Čtvrtstoleté jubileum založení Stavoprojektu” [The Twenty-Fifth Anniversary of the Establishment of Stavoprojekt], 489. See also “Úvod” [Introduction], unpaginated, ÚSBOV, finding aid, NA.

160. Alice Teichová, *The Czechoslovak Economy, 1918–1980* (London: Routledge, 1988), 142. See also Myant, *Czechoslovak Economy, 1948–1988*, 65–74; Edward Taborsky, *Communism in Czechoslovakia, 1948–1960* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1961), 357–63, 398–404.

161. Taborsky, *Communism in Czechoslovakia*, 363. Renewed interest in the “care of man” in the 1953 decree was certainly part of this redirecting. See Janů, “K otázce montovaných bytových staveb” [On the Question of Prefabricated Housing], 35.

162. Myant, *Czechoslovak Economy*, 68.

163. *Ibid.*, 74–79.

164. “Projev soudruha ministra předsedy SVV na ustavující schůzi ÚSBOV,” Jan. 20, 1956, ÚSBOV, carton 2, NA.

165. At their third meeting, on March 5, 1956, the Central Administration’s executive committee discussed the nationwide system of building material production; they viewed charts and a map showing the locations and types of factories in operation around the country. See the charts and map in ÚSBOV, carton 2, NA.

166. ÚSBOV, cartons 1–14, NA. Quarterly and yearly reports are filed in the records of the executive meetings.

167. Minutes from executive committee meetings, 1956–1958, ÚSBOV, cartons 1–14, NA. Each quarter a proposal for international travel was made to the executive committee of ÚSBOV. Upon return, architects filed a report about what they had done and where they had been each day.

168. Vladimír Červenka, “Komentář k požadavkům na vědecko-technickou pomoc požadovanou od LDS a SSSR v roce 1957” [Commentary on the requirements for scientific-technical help sought from the People’s Democratic Parties and the Soviet Union in 1957], undated, 1, ÚSBOV, carton 1, NA. The term “countries from the camp of peace” referred to communist countries.

169. Ibid., 3–9.

170. Ibid., 3–4.

171. These goals were in place as early as 1946, although the services were often built much later or left out of projects before 1956 because of lack of resources. See “Postavíme města socialismu” [We Are Building the Cities of Socialism], undated (after Jan. 2, 1952), A25, VVV, carton 126, NA; Karel Pilát, “Výstavba vzorných sídlišť a jejich poslání” [The Construction of the Model Housing Developments and Their Mission], *Architektura ČSR* 7, no. 6–7 (1948): 203.

172. Storch, *New Techniques and Architecture in Czechoslovakia*, 26.

173. “Dodatek k harmonogramu výrobního zajištění bytové výstavby do r. 1970 – Dopis: Státní plánovací komise, 5.9.1959” [Addendum to the production time table for producing apartments until 1970: Letter to the State Planning Commission, Sept. 5, 1959], SVV, carton 412, NA. Out of 42,301 apartments scheduled to be built in 1960, 7,061 were designated to be G-buildings and 22,547 to be T01-03B buildings, for which a panel system with a prefabricated skeleton was used.

174. See Lizon, “East Central Europe,” 104–14.

175. Rostislav Švácha, “Česká architektura 1956–1970,” in *Česká architektura / Czech Architecture, 1945–1995*, ed. Karel Dušek (Prague: Obec architektů, 1995), 41.

176. Lizon, “East Central Europe,” 108–9.

177. For more on the normalization period, see Paulina Bren, *The Greengrocer and His TV: The Culture of Communism after the 1968 Prague Spring* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2010).

178. Lizon, “East Central Europe,” 109–14.

179. Matt Reynolds, “Still Standing,” *Prague Post*, Mar. 10, 2005. See also Karel Maier, “Sídliště: problém a multikriteriální analýza jako součást přípravy k jeho řešení” [Housing Developments: The Problem and Multi-Criteria Analysis as a Component of the Preparation to Solve It], *Sociologický časopis* 39, no. 5 (2003): 653–66.

180. “Městské části Bratislavy” [City Districts of Bratislava], official Web site of the City of Bratislava, http://www.bratislava.sk/vismo/dokumenty2.asp?u=700000&id_org=700000&id=75053&p1=51337 (accessed May 15, 2010).

181. Reynolds, “Still Standing.”

EPILOGUE

Epigraph: Preston Benson, “Czechoslovakia in 1961,” *Town and Country Planning* 30 (1961): 351. “Flat-building program” in the original text.

1. Benson, “Czechoslovakia in 1961,” 351–58.

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COVER ART: (top) Jiří Štursa, Diagrams showing “analyses of the gravitational circles” for the Model Housing Development in Most, 1947; (bottom) G4o buildings under construction in Prague, c. 1956.

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